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# THE ROMANIC REVIEW

FOUNDED BY PROFESSOR HENRY ALFRED TODD

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THE DEPARTMENT OF ROMANCE LANGUAGES  
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# THE ROMANIC REVIEW

## A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION

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## PROTECTION OF LITERARY PROPERTY IN FRANCE DURING THE ANCIEN RÉGIME

By David T. Pottinger

PROTECTION of literary property has been one of the fundamental interests of the publishing business from the earliest days of printing. In 1498 Paul Maillet devoted a large part of the preface to his edition of Virgil, published by Ulric Gering and Berthold Rembolt, to a complaint about the widespread evils of piracy.<sup>1</sup> And in October and November 1950 experts from fifteen countries met at the Library of Congress in a conference sponsored by UNESCO to take the first steps toward the creation of a new universal copyright convention.<sup>2</sup> It is admittedly a vast and complicated subject. The present article proposes to examine only one facet of its earlier history—the development in France during the ancien régime (1500–1790). Although such a study has, it is true, little to offer for the solution of practical copyright questions of the present day, it does bring out a good many neglected but interesting aspects of literary as well as economic and legal history.

Every student knows that during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries France was a controlled economy climbing out of the disintegration of the Middle Ages toward the liberalism of the encyclopedists but menaced from time to time by such devastating upheavals as the Protestant Reformation, the Thirty Years' War, and the Seven Years' War. Control, however, was exercised not so much through a reign of law as through a reign of privilege. There were, of course, plenty of laws—far too many of them, in fact.<sup>3</sup> But these laws were subject to a host of special exceptions

1. André Chevillier, *L'Origine de l'imprimerie de Paris* (Paris, 1694), p. 206.

2. *Publishers Weekly* (New York), 7, 14, 28 October and 18 November 1950.

3. Students of the ancien régime are likely to be confused by the varying designations of the statutes, all of which seem to be of equal validity. They are thus defined in Lawrence C. Wroth and Gertrude L. Annan, *Acts of French Royal Administration, concerning Canada, Guiana, the West Indies and Louisiana prior to 1791* (New York, 1930), p. 5:

"The following statement of distinctions between various types of administrative acts has been summarized for us from pp. 184–185 and 584–587 of Jules Minier's *Précis historique du droit français*, Paris, 1846.

Édits were royal acts put forth spontaneously, *proprio motu*, and concerning as a rule only one matter, though there are exceptions. Édits were originally designated by a name of a place where they were drawn up.

Ordonnances were laws promulgated by the King, usually based on remonstrances or petitions which had been addressed to him. Most commonly they were of a more general nature than édits, containing provisions on a variety of subjects. Yet there were some ordonnances which related to a single matter and were issued spontaneously without any preceding representation to the King by his subjects.

Declarations interpreted or modified the law.

Mandements and rescripts were orders to execute the law; instructions were similar. Règlements were purely administrative acts.

To this summary may be added the statement in Boislaile's *Mémoires de Saint-Simon* . . . : 'Ces arrêts du conseil d'en haut, émanant du Roi lui-même, sont l'expression la plus élevée de son pouvoir et de son autorité souveraine.' "

which added still further confusion to the chaos induced by a low level of social development and a merely rudimentary notion of the principles of public administration. As in the case of all other industries, the preambles to the various laws for the book trade complain loudly of the disregard and abuse of the regulations.<sup>4</sup> So late as 1723 Matthew Marais remarked that certain prohibitions in the trade were useless. Thirty-five years later the general attitude was no better; for when Silhouette offered Moreau a new post in 1758, he said to him, "We make laws but forget them as soon as they are made."<sup>5</sup> Only a constant awareness of this national cynicism and the reasons for it, can excuse the intricacies of the struggle to reach an equitable basis for the share of both publisher and author in their joint enterprise.

## I

At this distant date we must remember that the transition from manual copying to printing involved a shift that had no parallel till in the twentieth century automobiles replaced wagons, the garage supplanted the blacksmith's shop, and horseshoeing became almost a lost art. By the middle of the fifteenth century the making of books had already moved out of the monasteries, largely as a result of the demand for textbooks, and was supervised by the University of Paris. There were at the time over ten thousand copyists in France<sup>6</sup> and a very large number of ordinary booksellers. At their head and responsible for the conduct of the trade were twenty-four *libraires jurés*, superior booksellers and publishers, who had taken an oath of office from the Rector of the University and who were considered as much a part of the staff as the Faculties themselves.<sup>7</sup> With the introduction of typography, production continued to be under University supervision for several decades, the copyists were pushed aside by printers, and the *libraires* continued as booksellers and publishers. In the course of time the original loose business organization proved too weak for increasingly complicated economic requirements and in 1618 the trade assumed the regular guild form of executive structure.

In spite of all these developments the author's position at first changed little. The writing of theological commentaries and of textbooks had been almost of a communal nature, with little attention to the author as an individual and no conception of his "rights" in his manuscript. It was not until the eighteenth century that he took his proper place and began to insist upon his just rewards. In the intervening period he ob-

4. Eli F. Heckscher, *Mercantilism*, English tr., 2 vols. (London, 1935), I, 166.

5. Mathieu Marais, *Journal et mémoires*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1863-1868), II, 470; Jacob-Nicolas Moreau, *Mes Souvenirs*, ed. C. Hermelin, 2 vols. (Paris, n. d.), I, 68; cf. also E. J. F. Barbier, *Journal historique et anecdotique*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1847-1856), II, 451 and III, 437.

6. M. Gastambide, *Historique et théorie de la propriété des auteurs* (Paris, 1862), p. 12. Paul Mellottée, *Histoire économique de l'imprimerie* (Paris, 1905), p. 23, puts the number of copyists at six thousand in 1470.

7. Chevillier, op. cit., pp. 339-342; E. Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières avant 1789*, 2d ed., 2 vols. (Paris, 1901), II, 484.

tained his bread and butter as a governmental official or as a teacher or through the patronage of a wealthy friend.<sup>8</sup> He sold his manuscript outright to a publisher and thereafter had no financial interest in it. He could not print and sell his own books<sup>9</sup> but was obliged to deal with a member of the guild. He might be paid again for a revised edition though not for new printings, and in the course of time it did become more or less usual for him to be paid an annuity, which somewhat resembles our royalty arrangement.

Throughout the ancien régime, therefore, protection against piracy was an issue only among rival publishers, each of whom sought to hold onto, as long as possible under increasing competition, exclusive publishing rights to titles he had originally bought. There was no general law against piracy until 1618. Publishers, in accordance with the business practice of the time, applied for a "privilège," a special law granting a monopoly on sales for a certain term—one, two, ten, sometimes as much as fifty years. The author might be granted a privilege for a book of his own, but he always sold it to a publisher along with the manuscript.<sup>10</sup> The privilege gave the publisher at least theoretical protection for his property but it soon became, in addition, a method of centralization and control for a government that was continually tending toward the absolutism finally achieved under Louis XIV and Louis XV.

Another and perhaps even more important device for controlling this potentially dangerous invention of printing was the "permission to print" or "permission."<sup>11</sup> This was based on the fundamental duty of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Paris to inspect the work of the medieval copyists for correctness of text, almost as necessary and routine a requirement as proof reading today. Naturally it led to verification and approval of textual statements and suppression of heresy, immorality, criticism of the government, or even violation of good taste. By an *édit* of 13 June 1521 Francis I established formal censorship; no book or pamphlet was thereafter to be printed or sold without authorization from the Theological Faculty. At the same time the Parlement of Paris insisted upon its right to grant permissions as well as to suppress books already printed. The law of 1521 was repeated many times throughout the century. At last by a law of 11 May 1612 the right to grant permissions was taken away from the Parlement, and the whole matter of censorship was placed in control of the political authorities in 1618<sup>12</sup> and 1624.<sup>13</sup>

8. Georges Mongrédiens, *La Vie littéraire au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1947), pp. 257-280; Maurice Pellisson, *Les Hommes de lettres au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1911), ch. 3.

9. *Édit* of 1 June 1618. Isambert, Jourdan, Decrusy, *Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises*, 29 vols. (Paris, 1821-1833), XVI, 120; L. N. Cristea, *Contribution à l'étude du droit d'auteur* (Paris, 1938), pp. 63, 78.

10. Mellottée, op. cit., pp. 79, 81.

11. A. C. Renouard, *Traité des droits d'auteur dans la littérature, les sciences, et les beaux-arts*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1838), I, 31-105.

12. Isambert, op. cit., XVI, 26-28; 120.

13. Renouard, op. cit., I, 58-61.

A permission was the first step in the publication of a book, but it was entirely distinct from the privilege. As Pouillet says, "Permission to print was not the privilege, and it remained legally obligatory even after the system of privileges came into existence. It preceded the privilege, and the privilege could not be granted before permission to print had been obtained."<sup>14</sup> A confusion, however, soon arose in the use of the two terms so that we find contemporary laws as well as other documents using "permission" and "privilège" interchangeably. Nevertheless the actual distinction remained and must be kept clearly in mind in our discussion. The permission conveyed the censor's approval of the text and had nothing to do with the ownership of that text; the privilege conveyed the King's grant of a sales monopoly for a limited term. It should be noted that although many books, especially in the early sixteenth century, were issued without a privilege, they always had to carry the approval of a censoring authority.<sup>15</sup>

Though the lawmakers of the ancien régime had no pattern in mind, it is possible to make a rough classification of privileges.<sup>16</sup> In a first category are the general and the special: general ones granted for the whole country and for a specific book; general ones granted either for the whole country or for a specific locality and for a series of books; special ones granted for a single work and a single locality. In a second category are those granted for a limited term and those without term. The most important are the special and temporary, that is, those granted for a single work for a specified territory and for a limited time. General privileges were rather unusual and were forbidden by the laws of 7 June 1659<sup>17</sup> and 4 June 1674.<sup>18</sup>

One indication of the optional and purely commercial nature of the early privileges is the fact that the publisher, if he wanted one, might make application to the Chancellor, the Parlement of Paris, the University, the Provost of Paris, or the Chief of Police of Paris.<sup>19</sup> Protestant publishers were of course unable to meet the requirements for a permission and therefore for a privilege—a situation which caused so much disorder that Charles IX issued an *édit* 10 September 1563 making obligatory the obtaining of a privilege sealed by the Chancellor.<sup>20</sup> But whoever granted the privilege, the medieval idea persisted that the contents of a book were common property. The privilege merely created a temporary and special exception authorized by the government as a favor to the publisher.

14. E. Pouillet, *Traité théorique et pratique de la propriété littéraire et artistique et du droit de représentation*, 3d ed. (Paris, 1908), p. 7.

15. Renouard, op. cit., I, 109.

16. Cristea, op. cit., pp. 65-67; H. Falk, *Les Priviléges de librairie sous l'ancien régime* (Paris, 1906), p. 71.

17. Isambert, op. cit., XVII, 370.

18. Claude Saugrain, *Code de la librairie et de l'imprimerie* (Paris, 1744), p. 366; F. Malapert, "Histoire abrégée de la législation sur la propriété littéraire avant 1789," *Journal des Economistes*, 4 series, no. 35, November 1880, p. 280.

19. Edouard Maugis, *Histoire du Parlement de Paris*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1913-1916), II, 314; Malapert, loc. cit., p. 268.

20. Chevillier, op. cit., pp. 395-396.

There is no point in trying to establish what book can claim the minor distinction of being the first one issued with a privilege. Chevillier says that the oldest he could find in the library of the Sorbonne in 1694 were the one given by Louis XII in 1507 to Antoine Vérard for an edition of St. Paul's *Epistles* with French annotations, one given by the Parlement 12 January 1508 to Berthold Rembolt for an edition of St. Bruno, and others dated in 1509, 1511, 1517, and 1518. He notes that the Parlement had evidently given others before 1508.

This last statement is borne out by the colophon for the *Chronique de Gennes*:

Here ends the chronicle of Genoa and Milan abridged, with the ordinances and laws made in the said city of Genoa by King Francis, the seventh of that name. Printed at Paris by Eustace de Brie, merchant publisher, living at the [sign of the] Wooden Shoe behind the [church of the] Magdalene. And to him the court of Parlement and the attorney of the King have given one year of time to sell and distribute said books; and all publishers and printers and all others are forbidden to print said book within one year next following the commencement of the seventeenth day of June 1507 and the said day 1508.

Many early sixteenth-century books give notice of being "protected" by carrying on the title page the phrase "Cum gratia & privilegio Christianissimi Francorum Regis," or "Cum privilegio Regis ad decennium," or "Avec privilege du Roy," or "Cum amplissimo Regis privilegio," "Cum privilegio," or "Avec privilege." In some cases the privilege or an extract is also printed on a later page. Early privileges were likely to be brief; for example, the following is printed on the verso of the title page of *G. Budaei Parisiensis Viri Clarissimi Vita*, by Ludovicus Regius Constantinus, issued by John de Roigny of Paris in 1542.

John de Roigny, publisher *juré* of the University of Paris, is permitted to cause to be printed and to put on sale a book entitled *G. Budaei Vita*, by Ludovicus Regius, newly written and printed; and all other publishers and printers are forbidden to print or sell it for two years upon penalty of confiscation of said books and arbitrary fine.

Later privileges, especially after the law of 1566, which required quotation in full, take up considerable space.<sup>21</sup> An interesting example is that which fills over a folio page of la Mothe Le Vayer's *Conseiller d'estat ordinaire*, printed by Augustin Courbé in 1662. This is further interesting because it is a general privilege and because it was granted to the author himself.

The vital part in the text of the privilege is the term of years it covers and the warning against piracy. These two items were the practical expression of the object of the document; that is, to allow the publisher sufficient time to recoup his investment without competition, to protect the trade as a whole from competition that would come from the importation of

21. Saugrain, op. cit., p. 357.

foreign books, and to protect members of the guild from piracies issued by other members.<sup>22</sup> The need for protection is nowadays a commonplace but it must have seemed especially important to the French publisher of the sixteenth century. At that time the best sellers were the Greek and Latin classics and the Church Fathers. The investment in the actual manufacture of such editions was probably the least part of the publisher's expenses, for he had to buy a manuscript or perhaps several copies of a manuscript, and edit and annotate it with great care before he had copy for printing. If his property were not protected in some way, any other printer could with comparatively little expense reproduce the edited text with or without the notes. Such piracy would be all the more serious because the market at best was small and the books themselves were usually large. The government was quick to add this motive of fostering an infant industry to its fundamental urge to suppress the evil consequences of unrestricted piracy. In an effort to facilitate the detection of illegal publication, a law was issued 11 December 1547 requiring that the name of the author and the name and address of the printer be included at the beginning of every book on religion.<sup>23</sup> This was quickly extended to cover books on all other subjects.

Another stipulation in the laws, and one which continually caused much trouble, was that copies of every book on which a privilege was granted should be deposited with the authorities. The first mention of this is in a law of Francis I, dated 8 December 1536, which forbids selling or sending to a foreign country any books or pamphlets in any language unless a copy had been sent to the librarian of the Château of Blois.<sup>24</sup> The next mention is in the ordonnance of Montpellier, 28 December 1537. In later laws the number of copies to be deposited varied from time to time; in 1785 the requirement was nine.

By the middle of the sixteenth century the volume of publication had reached considerable proportions. To the editions of the classics was being added an increasing amount of work by contemporary authors on all varieties of subject matter. Reprints and translations of foreign works increased the totals. As a result there arose a bitter quarrel regarding the distinction between privileges for "ancient" books and privileges for "new" or contemporary books.

At the same time began an even more serious dispute, one that was never really settled in the ancien régime—the whole matter of the renewal or continuation of privileges. It is quite understandable that at the expiration of a privilege a publisher could plead for a renewal on the ground that he had not recovered his costs or that he found a large and slow-moving stock of unsold copies on his hands. But the granting of a long renewal

22. Maugis, op. cit., II, 310; Renouard, op. cit., I, 106; Pouillet, op. cit., p. 6.  
23. Isambert, op. cit., XIII, 37-38.

24. Saugrain, op. cit., p. 415; Renouard, op. cit., I, 43, note 1. All the documents on deposit copies may be found in Henri Lemaitre, *Histoire du dépôt légal*, 1<sup>re</sup> partie (France), (Paris, 1910). See also Robert Crouzel, *Le Dépôt légal* (Toulouse, 1936).

or of a series of renewals might have, and actually did have, the effect of changing the publisher's attitude. He no longer thought of his privilege as a temporary favor but as a guarantee of indefinite or even perpetual rights. The lines were soon drawn between a small group of Paris publishers with valuable privileges and, on the other side, the publishers in the provincial cities<sup>25</sup> and the poorer ones in Paris, who had few privileges and found it difficult to build up their lists.

Although the law of 10 September 1563, as we have said before, concentrated the granting of privileges in the hands of the King, the Parlement of Paris took a vigorous part in the matter of renewals. In general it tried to impose a limit on the term and to substitute regularity for the arbitrary actions of the government. Its *arrêt* of 18 April 1578 forbade requests for renewal for either an ancient or a contemporary book unless there were an increase in the amount of text, that is, a real revision or new edition.<sup>26</sup> In 1579 it decreed that in future privileges should be issued only for contemporary books.<sup>27</sup> It annulled (15 March 1586) a privilege that had been granted for an edition of Seneca, revised and annotated by Muret, on the ground that the work had been printed some time before in Rome.<sup>28</sup> Occasionally the King's Council would issue a decision in line with the Parlement's point of view, but on the whole the government favored the attitude of the more powerful publishers.

## II

By 1600 the direction in which the book trade was to develop had been pretty well settled. During the seventeenth century the government in its efforts to stamp out sedition and heresy was obliged to issue frequent decrees requiring preliminary censorship approval of a manuscript and forbidding the sale of a book unless the name of author and printer were given at the beginning and a copy of the privilege at either the beginning or the end. By a law of 2 October 1643 printers were forbidden to start a job until they had given notice to the syndic of the guild and had shown him the Chancellor's permission. By the general law of 1649 all privileges had to be registered in the syndic's office within a week after the grant.<sup>29</sup>

From time to time the monopoly on the sales of various special classes of publication was the subject of legal enactment. A declaration of Louis XIII, issued 11 May 1612 and renewed in January 1626, authorized the various courts to set their own regulations for the publication of their

25. Mellottée (*op. cit.*, p. 452) says that at the beginning of the sixteenth century there were printing shops in more than forty cities of France, and at the beginning of the eighteenth century there were 158 cities with one or more shops (p. 459). In the first quarter of the seventeenth century there were 270 master printers and publishers in Paris (p. 456).

26. Gastambide, *op. cit.*, p. 16; Renouard, *op. cit.*, I, 109.

27. E. Laboulaye et G. Guiffrey, *La Propriété littéraire au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1859), pp. 456, 528-529.

28. Cristea, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

29. Saugrain, *op. cit.*, pp. 359, 360; Cristea, *ibid.*, p. 79.

edicts and judgments. In 1687 Frédéric Léonard was given sole right to print laws concerning governmental finances. In 1690 the Parlement forbade the printing of any of its decrees without its special permission, and in 1696 it forbade the printing of pamphlets for litigants unless the pamphlets were signed by the litigants' attorneys.<sup>30</sup>

Almanacs and ABC's, for which there was an enormous sale, had always been in the public domain; the continuance of this status was assured by the legislation of June 1618 and August 1686. On the other hand there was strict control over pamphlets, broadsides, and placards, the Paris Chief of Police rather than the Council being the authorizing official in this instance. In 1682 the Council found it necessary to forbid the printing of theses unless approved by the dean of the Faculty of the University of Paris.<sup>31</sup>

Another kind of small but very profitable books was the *Usages*, that is, breviaries, missals, and other devotional works. When the States General met in 1614, the provincial publishers appealed to it against the attempts of the Paris publishers to monopolize the privileges for the Trentine Usages. The protests went unanswered, and the question came up again when the original privileges expired in 1630. The Paris publishers, no one of whom could have alone paid the necessary fees and handled the business, formed themselves into four groups, each competing for the renewal. By letters patent of 9 December 1631 it was granted to Richelieu on the ground that such books should be under the supervision of an ecclesiastic.<sup>32</sup> He was given the right to choose his publishing agents and to grant them exclusive sales rights for thirty years.

This of course was a "general" privilege, the use of which might be explained by the nature of the literary property itself. A comparable one was granted 15 April 1667 by Louis XIV to the Duke of Roannès, Count de la Feuillade.<sup>33</sup> At the end of the campaign in Flanders that year Louis found the treasury empty, so that there was no ready cash with which to reward the Duke for his services. So Louis gave him a general privilege, good for fifty years, to print and sell ordinances, *formulaires*, edicts, declarations, *arrêts*, and other such documents. Roannès on 14 April 1668 ceded a third of the privilege to Denis Thierry and his associates. Even at that late date, it would seem, the "privilège en librairie" was very much a part of the general system of privileges by which the King controlled the state.

Every few years it was necessary to call attention to the requirement of depositing copies in the King's library. This became a definite condition for the granting of a privilege, and a publisher was not supposed

30. Isambert, op. cit., XVI, 26-28, 164, and XX, 52, 101; Saugrain, ibid., p. 426.

31. Saugrain, ibid., pp. 426; 460; 361, 369; 381.

32. Malapert, loc. cit., pp. 270-273.

33. Ibid., pp. 277-279.

to be covered until the day he deposited the copies.<sup>34</sup> For a long time only two were demanded. Article 9 of the edict of August 1686 called for two for the King's library and one for the syndic of the guild. It is typical of the period that it was difficult to enforce even so simple a requisite. An *arrêt* of 17 May 1672, for instance, decreed that all authors, publishers, and printers who had obtained privileges within the preceding twenty years should, within fifteen days after the promulgation of the law, furnish to the Keeper of the King's Library two copies of all books not previously deposited. Four years later (1 May 1676) a similar law was issued, the penalty for noncompliance being confiscation and sale of the edition and a fine of 1500 livres. All this did no good, however, for on 31 January 1685 the law of 1672 was repeated and confirmed together with the penalties of 1676.<sup>35</sup> By this time, of course, the library was in many cases thirty-three years in arrears! Delinquent publishers, says the *arrêt*, "shall be forced to obey by all due and reasonable means."

That the far greater tort of piracy should be widespread under such circumstances is scarcely cause for surprise. Falk is undoubtedly correct when he says that all publishers did some pirating and were therefore not too rigorous in pursuing infractions of their own rights.<sup>36</sup> They were most severe in cases when a provincial publisher was involved, but that was due to the determined efforts of the Paris publishers to monopolize all branches of the trade. Even at that, it must have been possible for a clever provincial publisher to escape detection a good many times. Furthermore, the less prosperous printers and publishers in Paris itself were easily able to take a successful title, reproduce it exactly in every detail down to privilege, name of printer, and the like, and quietly absorb a large number of sales. Or the pirated edition might not be an exact copy; even though printed a few doors from the shop of the authorized publisher, it might be given a different format and carry the name and address of a foreign printer—a real or a fictitious person in a real or fictitious town in Holland, Belgium, or Switzerland. Since there was no international protection of literary property and since smuggling was not even a fine art, such violations of the law were hard to detect and harder still to prove. And finally, of course, the piracy might be a genuine piece of foreign work.

Officials of the guild must have spent a large part of their time in searching for books smuggled in from abroad and in running down piracies, for the records contain many instances in which the law was invoked and the penalty applied. In 1625 Sébastien Cramoisy claimed that he had a right to get books printed in Lorraine in virtue of a brevet granted him by the King to serve as publisher and printer to the Duke of Lorraine. An *arrêt*

34. Saugrain, op. cit., pp. 395, 415; Isambert, op. cit., XVI, 106-108; Pierre Guenois, *Grande Conférence des ordonnances et édits royaux*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1678), II, 1089.

35. Saugrain, ibid., pp. 397; 396; 416-418; Isambert, ibid., XX, 6-20; XIX, 489.

36. Falk, op. cit., p. 145. This statement is borne out by the many documents in the Collection Anisson on specific piracies; see Ernest Coyecque, *Inventaire de la collection Anisson*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1900), I, 145-166.

of the Council 18 November 1625 forbade him to have any books printed outside of France so long as he was connected with the University of Paris. The Châtelet on 21 March 1654 confiscated certain contraband volumes found in six cases of books sent from abroad to the banker Gaspard Vauganger. The syndic and wardens of the guild obtained a judgment of the Châtelet 7 March 1663 against François Foppens, a bookseller of Brussels, who had sent to Paris two casks in which were found various pirated books. The casks were confiscated and the books sold; of the proceeds forty-eight livres parisis went to Etienne Dallin—evidently the informer—and the remainder went half to the Châtelet for repairs on the building and half to the guild. In 1664 Florentin Lambert, a bookseller, received two packages from Flanders containing pirated books; he swore to the syndic, Edme Martin, that he had not ordered them. They were confiscated and sold for the benefit of the guild. In 1680 Raymond Basset tried to smuggle three bundles of pirated books into Paris, but he was caught and the books were turned over by the syndic to the owners of the privileges.<sup>37</sup>

But the punishment might be much more costly for the offender. Saugrain cites instances where fines of 200, 400, 500, or as much as 1500 livres were levied. An *arrêt* of the Council 11 September 1665 authorized the holders of privileges or continuations to seize and put under guard all copies of pirated books, together with the presses, types, and other material used in the printing; and the case was to be brought before the Council for judgment. An *arrêt* of the Parlement 26 February 1671 provided that any publisher or printer who counterfeited in a pirated book the privilege and the name of the owner of the privilege, should be permanently deprived of his connection with the guild.<sup>38</sup>

During the greater part of the seventeenth century the struggle continued over the status of classical ("ancient") books and over continuations of privileges. The law of 1 June 1618 again forbade the granting of a continuation for ancient books except for an enlarged edition; otherwise they were in the public domain.<sup>39</sup> On this occasion nothing was said about privileges for contemporary works, which were evidently still subject to arbitrary decision on the part of the authorities. By a law issued 19 January 1626 and renewed 27 December 1627, ancient texts were definitely exempted from any need for a permission. Gradually, however, the government extended its controls and the Chancellor warned the guild in 1647 that henceforward no book, of whatever size or on whatever subject, should be printed without a privilege. When the guild asked that ancient books be exempted as before, there was complete refusal. No book could now be freely printed even though the privilege had expired; at least a renewal was required.

37. Saugrain, op. cit., pp. 391; 421-422; 424.

38. Ibid., pp. 361, 422, 423, 425.

39. Isambert, op. cit., XVI, 124; Cristea, op. cit., p. 77; Renouard, op. cit., I, 120; Mellottée, op. cit., p. 86.

In December 1649 new general regulations were drawn up for the trade. These permitted the continuation of privileges for ancient books, but other publishers might be given a concurrent privilege for issuing the same text in a different format. To prevent competition it was also ordered that all privileges should be registered with the guild. At the same time the Council issued a special *arrêt* on privileges (20 December 1649). This law forbade piracy, required printing of the privilege at the beginning or end of a book, insisted upon registration within the month of the grant, forbade renewal of a privilege until the original had expired, and gave preference to original owners in cases of renewal. There was much opposition from the nonprivileged publishers. At this point the quarrel was further complicated by the fact that on 17 March 1650 the guild held a meeting and decided on ten new articles, not related to privileges, to be presented to the Parlement for addition to the statutes of the preceding December. Some three hundred publishers, printers, and binders opposed this action and asked that the laws of 1618 be kept in force. The University also protested, claiming that the publishers of Paris were trying to dominate the trade and ruin those in the provinces. The regulation of 1649 was finally registered without the section on privileges. During the next few years the Parlement continued its opposition to renewals and on 7 September 1657 forbade any renewal unless the reprint contained at least twenty-five per cent of new material. The Council also held to its precedents and granted renewals; in 1663 it decreed that "letters of continuation" should be obeyed in spite of rules and regulations to the contrary.<sup>40</sup> The not inconsiderable revenue obtained from renewals as well as from original privileges doubtless played a part in the Council's attitude.

Finally in 1664 all the difficulties of the trade came to a head in a lawsuit between Georges Josse, a Paris publisher, as plaintiff, and Clément Malassis, a Rouen publisher, and Pierre de La Motte, a Rouen printer, as defendants. Josse had obtained renewals of his privileges for three books by Matthieu Beuvelet, *Les Méditations chrétiennes et ecclésiastiques*, *La Vraye et Solide Dévotion*, and *L'Instruction sur le manuel*. Malassis, supported by his colleagues in Rouen and by the publishers of Lyons, protested against the "injustice" of the renewal by pirating the books. Josse was supported by the Paris guild, the syndic of which was Antoine Etienne, printer to the King and a descendant of the famous old printer family. Josse's case was based upon the regulations of 1649 and upon the exhibition of copies, furnished by Etienne, of ninety-seven renewals for various books granted by Louis XIII and Louis XIV to publishers in Paris, Lyons, Rouen, and other cities between 1641 and 1664. Malassis pointed out that the articles on renewals in the law of 1649 had not been registered and also cited the *arrêt* of 7 September 1657 as well as other *arrêts* of the Parlement.

40. Cristea, *ibid.*, p. 79; Renouard, *ibid.*, I, 128; Chevillier, *op. cit.*, pp. 338-339; Gastambide, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

The issue between the King's Council and the Parlement was clearly drawn. There could be no doubt of the decision in view of the general policy pursued by Louis and Colbert. The Council, 9 August 1664, fined Malassis and La Motte 6000 livres and confiscated their editions.<sup>41</sup>

Shortly afterward (27 February 1665) the Council confirmed all privileges that had been previously granted to publishers in various cities. It further ruled that in the future an applicant for a renewal must present his petition one year before the expiration of the original,<sup>42</sup> that there should be no requests for privileges or continuations for ancient texts unless there were "considerable" additions and corrections, that other publishers would be allowed to reissue ancient texts without revisions or additions, that original privileges must be registered with the Paris guild, and renewals with the guilds in Paris, Lyons, Rouen, Toulouse, Bordeaux, and Grenoble, and that there might not be a delay of more than six months between the granting of a privilege and the beginning of manufacture. Most important of all, in some ways, was a clause which stressed the King's right to summon a pirating publisher before the Council. This was a blow at the authority of the Parlement in such matters.

This law of 1665 finally drew a distinction between old books and contemporary books, a distinction that was further clarified by the law of 19 June 1671 which defined an ancient author as one who had died before the "invention" of printing, that is, before the introduction of printing into France in 1470. The law, however, did nothing to decrease the arbitrary nature of the privilege and of continuations; there was no attempt to establish regularity and uniformity. But on the whole a fair compromise had been worked out: the provincial publishers were given access to the important body of classical texts, and the privileged publishers were encouraged to look forward to long possession of their monopolies of modern authors.

There now ensued a period of calm on this point, but new quarrels on other trade practices led in 1686 to a fresh set of general regulations which included articles on privileges and piracy.<sup>43</sup> These confirmed the *arrêt* of 1665, thus strengthening the Council's position in conformity with the prevailing effort to centralize administrative powers. The regulation of 1686 applied at first only to Paris but it was extended in 1695 to cover Lyons also.

### III

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the publishing business was facing the present and the future rather than antiquity. Apprentices

41. Cristea, *ibid.*, p. 83; Falk, *op. cit.*, p. 85; Renouard, *ibid.*, I, 140. The documents are in the Collection Anisson; see Coyecque, *op. cit.*, I, 147, 148. A copy of the judgment is to be found in Georges Lepreux, *Gallia Typographica*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1909-1913), tome III, vol. 2, pp. 194-195.

42. Saugrain, *op. cit.*, pp. 360, 376.

43. Renouard, *op. cit.*, I, 142; Isambert, *op. cit.*, XX, 6-20; Saugrain, *ibid.*, pp. 363, 424, 460, 368, 376, 397, 391.

were no longer required to have a knowledge of Greek. Theological speculation, it is true, still exerted a powerful hold upon the interests of writers and readers as controversial books and pamphlets on Jansenism and on the Jesuits rushed from the presses. On the other hand works of scholarly research followed the establishment of the Académie Française, the Académie des Inscriptions, and other learned societies. The *Journal des Scavans* and the *Mercure de France* began their long careers. Government, politics, history, and economics became common topics of reading. Esthetics, archaeology, physics, and chemistry, not to mention astronomy and mathematics, occupied the new curiosity. Patronage was on the decline, and the independent author began to develop the various fields of belles-lettres. Subscription sets, encyclopedias, dictionaries, and anthologies found eager purchasers. Great libraries brought a need for great librarians and bibliographers.

On the business side, the publisher had increasing need to guard his investments, follow up advantages, and meet the tricks of his competitors. General conditions in the trade at this period are revealed in a pamphlet, *Mémoire sur les vexations qu'exercent les libraires et imprimeurs de Paris*, attributed to Pierre Jacques Blondel and issued in 1725.<sup>44</sup> Marais, writing at the time it came out, thought it a faithful picture, but Renouard considered its virulence rather overdrawn. With a mere nod to certain honest publishers, Blondel calls the majority of them Jews, Arabs, harpies, vile traffickers, who cheat the public by charging outrageous prices for books printed on poor paper with muddy ink and worn types and shockingly bad proof reading. They have developed the privilege, he says, into an instrument for controlling the supply, and thus the prices, of books. They demand continuations on the ground that they have not recovered the costs of the first edition—though in one case a title was in the thirty-sixth edition! They secure subscriptions but delay manufacture; and, in sets of several volumes, postpone the appearance of the last in order to stretch out the term of the privilege. They fatten upon exorbitant profits at the expense of the general public and of poor students. They form a close group fenced in by regulation after regulation; but these laws are all designed for their advantage rather than for the protection of the public.

The second section of Blondel's pamphlet considers the relation between publishers and authors. He points out that the author gets little return for his work, whereas the publishers on the whole have become a rich group. Once the investment for a book has been recovered, the author should get a reasonable part of the profit so long as the book continues to sell. One reason for the unfortunate situation of authors is the law which forbids anyone to have a book printed in his own name and sold by others than publishers. In an attempt to evade this law, some authors have paid printing costs and have distributed the edition among a certain

44. A modern reprint, with introduction and notes by Lucien Faucon, was issued in Paris in 1879. There is some question of authorship, which Faucon decides in favor of Pierre-Jacques Blondel (1674-1730).

number of booksellers on a sales basis. The booksellers, however, have blocked this scheme by discouraging sales—telling would-be customers that the books were not yet bound, that all copies were in the warehouse, and even pretending that the market was filled with pirated copies.

The importance of Blondel's pamphlet lies in the fact that here for the first time we have any recognition of the author's economic rights in his own work.<sup>45</sup> No one before had said:

It is just that each man should live by his own trade and that in proportion to his skill, his labor, his care, his attention, and his credit, he should find in his business the means to support his family and even to establish it. . . . For the same reason that publishers should gain their livelihood, the bread should not be snatched from the authors' hands. The publisher is made for the author, and not the author for the publisher. The latter is a merchant who sells. The author is a man who thinks and invents. The book he makes is his own work, and the printer or publisher merely distributes copies among the public—for money, of course. Why, then, does the publisher gather all the fruit of the work and the author get almost nothing?

For directness and vigor these words can be compared only to those with which Dr. Johnson a few years later proclaimed the rights of the author in England.

In the meantime the situation had called forth a new law dated 7 September 1701. This fixed fees for permissions and privileges, allowed a publisher who had obtained a privilege to associate himself with other printers and publishers for manufacture and sale, removed the requirement that a book must be printed in the town where its publisher lived, and took away from provincial judges the power to grant privileges for ancient authors or for those on which a privilege had expired. The provincial publishers, especially those in Lyons, were quick to protest, but the Chancellor merely promised to do what he could to help them.<sup>46</sup>

The preamble to an *arrêt* of 13 August 1703 pointed out various current attempts to evade the letter as well as the spirit of the laws.<sup>47</sup> In entering books on the register of the Paris guild certain publishers were not definite regarding the number of years fixed by the privilege; others had been registering only by abbreviated and incomplete extracts from the privilege; still others made secret transfers of rights; and in many cases notice of registration had not been sent to other cities as stipulated

45. Some writers have found an early suggestion of author's rights in connection with an *arrêt* of 15 March 1586 by which the Parlement canceled a privilege granted for an edition of Seneca with notes by Muret. The work had been first published several years before in Rome. The advocate Marion spoke for the court. He pointed out that although the author is originally complete master of his work and can even withhold it from the public, he loses his private rights in it as soon as it has been published and thereafter has no control over it. If Marion did have a conception of the author's real position, he did not use the idea in such a way as to advance the author's economic interests. See Renouard, op. cit., I, 111-112 and Cristea, op. cit., pp. 73-74.

46. Saugrain, op. cit., pp. 363, 372, 376, 381, 384, 391; Falk, op. cit., pp. 88, 90; Cristea, ibid., p. 85.

47. Saugrain, ibid., pp. 387-389.

in the *arrêt* of 27 February 1665. The King therefore ordered that the term was to be counted from the day the privilege was obtained and that all privileges granted in the past without specification of the term should be void. The *arrêt* further said that all privileges must be recorded with the guild in Paris within three months, that all transfers must be entered in the same register at full length, and that the records should be open to the inspection of everyone. The privilege must also be printed at the beginning or end of each copy. New registers were accordingly opened in the guild chamber at Paris; they fill twenty-four volumes now in the Bibliothèque Nationale.

The old requirement of deposit of copies was repeated in an *arrêt* of 17 October 1704, with the feeble admission that enforcement was difficult. Eight copies are demanded, and all authors, printers, publishers, and engravers throughout the kingdom are made responsible for delivering them to the syndic and wardens of the Paris guild. The penalty for failure to do so was cancellation of the privilege, confiscation of the edition for the benefit of the hospital nearest the place where such confiscation was made, and a fine of 1500 livres. To this the Lyons guild made strenuous objections. Finally on 9 May 1707 the Council ordered that the *arrêt* be carried out, with the proviso that when the Lyons guild found the cost of the copies too great, it was to be recompensed by the Chancellor. But the regulation had to be repeated 16 December 1715, and the King ordered the Paris guild to secure the missing deposits within eight days.<sup>48</sup> An *arrêt* of 11 October 1720 repeated the requirement!

Even more disturbing, however, must have been the evidently complete disregard of the law forbidding the publication of material relating to suits pending before the various councils and courts. A declaration of 12 May 1717 says that such pamphlets may be issued only if they are signed by an advocate or attorney "in the usual manner." One difficulty with unsigned accounts was their inaccuracy, but more important for our present inquiry is the fact that the printing of governmental documents was reserved for the six royal printers and that infringement of the monopoly was likely to be a considerable loss to them.<sup>49</sup>

A declaration issued 23 October 1713, which cleared up the interpretation of several obscure points in the *édit* of 1686 regarding the internal administration of the Paris guild, said almost nothing about the fundamental problem of privileges. Disagreement on certain of the articles led to a series of conferences in 1714, 1715, and 1717. At last on 10 December 1720 a revised law was issued; but since a number of defects were pointed out at once, it was withdrawn for further amendment. On 28 February 1723 the *édit* was finally issued.<sup>50</sup> It was theoretically applicable only to the Paris guild but after twenty-one years it was extended on 24 March 1744

48. *Ibid.*, pp. 398-415, 464.

49. Isambert, *op. cit.*, XXI, 126; Saugrain, *ibid.*, pp. 429-459.

50. Saugrain, *ibid.*, pp. 461-462; Isambert, *ibid.*, XX, pp. 608-611; XXI, 216-251.

to cover all parts of the kingdom. This was one of the most important regulations in the history of the trade, and it remained in force until August 1777.

The Code of 1723 attempted to summarize and unify all the confused legislation of the preceding two centuries in regard to printing and publishing. It consisted of sixteen Articles, subdivided into 123 sections. Article XV, comprising sections 101–112, was headed "On privileges and continuations of the same for the printing of books."

We are already familiar with most of the details. No books are to be printed without permission of the Chancellor. Pamphlets, not exceeding two sheets printed in Cicero (12 point type), must first be approved by the Chief of Police. A copy of the privilege and of the censor's approval must be printed at the beginning or end of each copy. If a work consists of several parts or volumes, each must be examined and approved, and this applies to all prefaces, forewords, dedicatory epistles, tables, supplements, and the like. Printers and publishers must send to the Keeper of the Seals the manuscript from which the book was set up or a printed copy initialed by the examiner. Within three months of the date the privilege is issued it must be recorded in the register of the Paris guild, without interlineation or erasure; and no book may be offered for sale before registration. The registers shall be open to everyone to make any inquiries or extracts he may wish. Books for which a privilege has been granted may be printed anywhere in the kingdom. Five copies must be deposited with the guild for governmental use and three copies for the use of the guild. All printers are forbidden to pirate books for which privileges or continuations have been granted. There is to be no monopoly on the printing and sale of reports, requests, petitions, certificates of burial, pardons, indulgences, and the like. Legal documents shall be printed only if the copy is signed by an authorized attorney; and *édits* of the Parlement and of the Court of Aides of Paris may not be printed without special permission of those courts. Print and map makers must obtain a privilege from the Chancellor or a permit from the Chief of Police and must register the plate or map with the guild. Various penalties are set forth for infraction of each provision of the law, usually cancellation of the privilege, confiscation of copies, and a stiff fine.

The new, and in some ways the most important, part of the law is the concluding paragraph:

His Majesty wills that the present law shall be executed according to form and tenor notwithstanding preceding regulations, which His Majesty hereby annuls as far as necessary; and if any opposition or obstacle is made to the present regulation, His Majesty reserves jurisdiction thereof and forbids it to all his courts and other judges; and for the execution of the present regulation all necessary letters shall be expedited.

In other words, the book trade was to be henceforth in the immediate charge

of the King. The Parlement had no further authority over approbations, permissions, privileges, or piracies.

M. Guiffrey points out that the law was silent on a number of important details. It said nothing about whether a privilege could be granted to anyone other than the owner of the manuscript or whether only the author or the publisher could obtain a privilege or a continuation. It evidently assumed that when an author sold his manuscript to a publisher he at the same time transferred his ownership completely and irrevocably. All that the modern author and publisher understand by the term "rights" was quite outside the definition of the law. Thus the privilege was a police regulation partly designed to control the circulation of harmful books and partly designed to protect the publisher for a limited number of years until he should have regained his capital investment.<sup>51</sup> The letter of the law, at any rate, had not changed in two hundred years.

As soon as direct access to the King had been provided by the law of 1723, the provincial publishers and the poorer publishers of Paris renewed before the Chancellor the complaints they had been more and more frequently bringing before the Parlement.<sup>52</sup> They contended that a manuscript in and for itself was valueless, that the author could do nothing with it that would be commercially profitable. It became endowed with value only when the State issued a privilege for it, thus enabling a publisher to manufacture and sell copies which would give him a profit. Since the privilege was a temporary monopoly conferred by the State, the State in fairness to the trade as a whole should make the term of that monopoly as short as possible, should refuse continuations, and should make the text available to all other publishers upon expiration of the original privilege. The result of prevailing practices in regard to continuations, said the petitioners, was to concentrate the book business in the hands of a few Paris publishers who had grown enormously wealthy from the monopoly and who were satisfied with nothing less than perpetual ownership of privileges.

To defend their rights the Paris publishers in 1725 engaged Louis d'Héricourt, a learned and celebrated advocate of the Parlement, to set forth their claims and determine the principles on which these claims rested.<sup>53</sup> His memoir is noteworthy as the earliest attempt in France to explore the theoretical nature of literary property and the rights involved in it.

D'Héricourt began by stating the question thus: Is it just and equitable to grant the provincial publishers permission to print books which belong to the publishers of Paris through their acquisition of authors' manuscripts? His negative answer was contained in two "propositions."

In the first place, he argues, the publisher owns a work that he issues, solely because the manuscript has been transmitted to him by the au-

51. Laboulaye et Guiffrey, op. cit., pp. 3-11, 16, 17.

52. Gastambide, op. cit., p. 27; Renouard, op. cit., I, 155.

53. Laboulaye et Guiffrey, op. cit., pp. 21-40; Renouard, ibid., I, 157; Cristea, op. cit., pp. 93-102.

thor in return for a cash payment. The author owns the manuscript because it is the fruit of personal labor which he can dispose of as he wishes in order to gain a livelihood. Hence only the author or those who represent him can legally pass his work over to another and transmit a right equal to that of the author himself. The King cannot transmit such a right, by privilege or otherwise, so long as the author is alive or is represented by heirs. The course of legislation shows that the privilege was always intended as an assurance to the publisher and to the public that the work contains nothing contrary to religion or the rights of the King or of private individuals. Beyond this, however, the privilege is a mark of the King's favor and a just method of inspiring the publisher to work for the glory of the kingdom and the good of the people. The King cannot sweep aside all precedents merely to please a group who have no real claim on the privileges already granted.

Two points are noteworthy in this discussion. First is the practical confusion of the permission (the censor's statement of approval) and the privilege (the Chancellor's grant of a sales monopoly). Second is the defining of the theoretical basis of the permission-privilege as partly a sign of royal favor and partly an act of justice, both due to the publisher for his public-spirited efforts.

D'Héricourt's second "proposition" is that a publisher's manuscripts—whether bought from authors or transferred from other publishers—are comparable to any other stock in trade; they are his assets just like real or personal property. Since men are not merely animals, there must be a class of thinkers and writers; and these must be able to command advantages proportionate to the importance of their work. Such advantages can be realized only if the writer is able to treat his manuscript as any other worker is able to treat the product of his industry, that is, transfer ownership for a price to anyone he chooses. The seller must be able to pass over to the new owner not only the manuscript itself but also the rights inherent in it. In other words, the acquisition of a manuscript is in no way different from the acquisition of a piece of real estate. The publisher, therefore, who has bought and paid for a manuscript or who has bought a privilege or a share in a privilege from another publisher, ought to be the perpetual owner just as if he had bought a piece of land. No one would be so foolish as to ask the King to give him a house because the owner had had it for a long time; and yet that is exactly what the provincial publishers are asking.

If the claims of these publishers were allowed, said d'Héricourt, the foundations of society and of commerce would be ruined. The laws of property must apply to all citizens; otherwise it is foolish to be sober, thrifty, and industrious. The statutes regulating the book trade should apply to all members equally, and these statutes forbid applications for privileges that belong to other publishers. If the field is thrown open, the provincial publishers will also be in danger of losing their privileges to competitors. Mutual jealousy, which destroys business security, will

become rampant. No publisher will be willing to buy a manuscript, and so the authors will stop working. Then the Dark Ages will return.

D'Héricourt's memoir thus took the new idea of the author's status which we have already noted in Blondel's pamphlet and twisted it to suit the needs of the publishers. From that point of view, as Guiffrey says, it presented a sensible, moderate, well-expressed statement of the whole problem. The government, however, was angered by the implied questioning of royal authority as well as by the general tone of the memoir. The syndic and wardens of the guild were demoted, and the printer was obliged to go into hiding. On the other hand, the petitions of the provincial publishers were rejected.

Among the many other addresses to the Chancellor by both privileged and nonprivileged publishers about this time there is one in which the Paris group clearly stated their ultimate goal once more.<sup>54</sup> They repeated d'Héricourt's argument that if a manuscript contains nothing contrary to religion, morals, the laws of the state, or the interest of individuals, it belongs completely to the author and he can no more be arbitrarily deprived of it than of his money and other property. It follows, then, that only the author or his representative can legally transfer it and the accompanying rights to another person. One of the attributes of ownership is the possibility of perpetual possession, which of course goes to the purchaser of the manuscript. The privilege is the King's method of preventing piracy and assuring the publisher of his exclusive rights in the work he has bought. The King himself is unable to take away this assurance of security and give it to another who has no right to it. Therefore—and this is the nub of the matter—privileges, with the possible exception of those for ancient authors, should be subject to perpetual renewals in favor of the owner of the manuscript.

Fortunately the Director of the book trade at this moment was a keen, broad-minded man. Malesherbes, who held the office from 1750 to 1763, was one of the few men of the time who could keep their heads in the confusion not only of the political but of the intellectual scene. For the publishing world was merely a reflection of the new ideas disseminated by the physiocrats, the philosophes, and the encyclopedists. In 1759 the Dauphin, the son of Louis XV, asked Malesherbes to draw up a report on the situation. This he did in five memoirs. Since they were not published till fifty years later, we cannot be sure of their immediate effect, but they do show the author's attitude and many details of the trade. Most of his recommendations are concerned with censorship and freedom of the press rather than with economic questions.

In the course of his fourth memoir<sup>55</sup> he examines the organization and conduct of the book guild. Among other changes he urges that authors

54. Falk, op. cit., pp. 98–101; Cristea, ibid., pp. 104–105; Coyecque, op. cit., I, 124, no. 40.

55. De Lamoignon de Malesherbes, *Mémoires sur la librairie et sur la liberté de la presse* (Paris, 1809), pp. 107–244.

should be excepted from the general prohibition limiting the selling of books to those who are members of the guild. He thinks that an author should have a chance to get the greatest possible return from his own work. In the case of other merchandise also the law reserves selling rights to members of the appropriate guild, but everyone has the right to sell the fruit of his own land. And a book is the fruit of its author's genius. The pretext for a prohibition is that no author would confine himself to the selling of his own books and that the guild officers could not force him to do so through the usual means of inspection. Malesherbes suspects that the real reason is to keep authors dependent upon the publishers, for after all it is easy to prove whether or not a man is selling books in general.

If anything more were needed to show the government's growing concern for the author and the modification of its traditional attitude toward the publishers, it is to be found in certain decisions of the Council within the next few years. In 1761 it granted to the granddaughters of La Fontaine a fifteen-year privilege for his works, in spite of the fact that he had sold them during his lifetime to Barbin, who in turn had sold them to others after obtaining several renewals of his privilege. Sympathy with the impoverished situation of the La Fontaine heirs may have had much to do with the Council's action, but in any case the guild faced the possibility of a dangerous precedent. The guild bought the privilege from the granddaughters.

In 1768 Luneau de Boisgermain was sued for selling books without belonging to the guild. As the author or editor of a large number of volumes he exchanged copies of his own books with the publishers of Paris and of the provinces for other books and then sold these to provincial booksellers. At the same time he acted as a purchasing agent for out-of-town booksellers. The Council on 30 January 1770 found against the guild and ordered it to pay damages and costs.

An *arrêt* of the Council 20 March 1777 in behalf of Fénelon's family decreed that continuations of privileges could not be granted to publishers without the consent of an author's heirs.<sup>56</sup> A few years later, however, this *arrêt* was revoked and a continuation was granted to the original publishers.

Both Malesherbes and his successor, Sartine, were bombarded with petitions and memoirs from the two groups of publishers. One of the most significant was presented to Sartine in March 1764 by the Paris guild.<sup>57</sup> We do not need to examine its arguments for perpetuity of the privilege based upon historical considerations and upon d'Héricourt's comparison of literary and other property. Much more important is the argument that a publisher's business is founded not so much on current best-sellers as upon a backlist of titles in slow but steady demand. If a publisher cannot renew the original privilege, says the guild, he will have no encouragement to

56. Renouard, op. cit., I, 164; Cristea, op. cit., pp. 127-130, 136-137.

57. Laboulaye et Guiffrey, op. cit., pp. 43-120.

invest in large, expensive works and he will be unable to keep important but slow moving titles in print. The charge of monopoly is neatly countered by pointing out that a privilege is limited to one title and does not prevent other publishers and authors from issuing other works on the same subject or in the same category. The memoir closes with a number of excellent suggestions in regard to the retail selling of books.

Before carrying the petition to his superiors, Sartine handed it over for comment to his assistant, Joseph d'Hémery. The latter wrote a series of notes in the margins of the document, from which we may construct the new official attitude.<sup>58</sup> He pointed out that the claim of the Paris publishers would lead to the ruin of printing and publishing in the provinces, a dangerous control of the trade centered in Paris, and eventually the destruction of the Chancellor's authority. Sartine was evidently satisfied with d'Hémery's comments and transmitted the annotated petition to the Vice-Chancellor 19 July 1764.

In August 1764 the provincial publishers came back with their reply to the memoir of March 1764.<sup>59</sup> This was a serious study of author's rights. It proposed that permissions and privileges should be granted only to authors; that an author should be at liberty to cede his privilege to any printer or publisher approved by the Vice-Chancellor; that at the author's death his works should fall into the public domain and all publishers should then be able to apply for a privilege for new editions; that all manuscripts found at the death of an author should belong to his family, who could choose a publisher to whom a limited and nonrenewable privilege might be granted. The memoir did not discuss the important question of the proper term for a privilege granted for a book in the public domain. It did point out a serious difficulty in the administration of the current laws: the guild registers, it said, were poorly kept, the entries copied in tiny or illegible handwriting, beginnings and endings of entries indistinguishable, entries beginning at the end of one volume and continued into a new one without indication, and no index. Furthermore the registers had to be consulted in the presence of the guild officers and at times set by them. Mere physical obstacles were almost as great a drawback as the laws themselves. The remedy, it was suggested, was to put the records into the Chancellor's office.

The memoir of 1764 may possibly have been written by Diderot; at any rate there is a striking resemblance between it and a *Lettre sur le commerce de la librairie* which he addressed to Sartine in July 1767. In it he advances only one new argument: absence of limitation on the term of privileges assures the financial stability of the publishers and this in turn works to the advantage of the authors. It must be said that however valid this idea may seem, it shows a strange incapacity on Diderot's part to appreciate the tendency of contemporary thinking.<sup>60</sup>

58. Malapert, *Journal des Economistes*, 4 series, no. 39, 4<sup>e</sup> année, no. 3, March 1881, pp. 453-466; Coyecque, op. cit., I, 138; Cristea, op. cit., pp. 107-116.

59. Falk, op. cit., pp. 102-104; Cristea, ibid., pp. 116-118.

60. Diderot, *Oeuvres complètes*, 20 vols. (Paris, 1875-1877), XVIII, 7-75; Bernard

The publishers of Lyons now addressed the King.<sup>61</sup> Their memoir points out how easy it is for Paris publishers to get the renewal of a privilege and how difficult it is for the provincial publishers. The latter cannot possibly take up the suggestion that they act as middlemen because the Paris publishers give a discount of only twelve or fifteen per cent, carriage charges additional. Besides, the Paris publishers sell by mail to out-of-town customers and thus flood the market before the agents can receive their supplies. The petition ends by urging that no renewals be granted.

On 15 October 1776 the publishers of Lyons, Rouen, Toulouse, Marseilles, and Nîmes issued a long and important memoir in which they emphasized the nature of the privilege itself as a justification for their claims.<sup>62</sup> The privilege, it says, is a device by which the government limits a purchaser's natural right to do what he wants with a book he has bought. But the privilege in turn should be limited because, once a writer has received a price for his work, the larger claims of society must be considered. For the author is not isolated: he is a member of society, and he has duties toward it just as he receives benefits from it. In other sections of the memoir the publishers assert, with appropriate instances in proof, that all continuations are contrary to the public good and that only complete freedom of business can restore prosperity, order, and unity to the book trade of Paris and of the provinces.

#### IV

The flood of petitions finally produced definite action. On 30 August 1777 Louis XVI issued six *arrêtés*<sup>63</sup> which modified, extended, or explained various provisions in the basic law of 1723. The first was concerned with the discipline of the journeymen printers. The second established semi-annual public auctions of stocks of books, privileges, and parts of privileges, to be held in Paris and open to the provincial publishers as well as to the Paris publishers. The third regulated the formalities to be observed in the reception of publishers and printers in the guilds. The fourth suppressed the guilds in several towns and created new ones in other towns. The fifth regulated the term of privileges. The sixth concerned piracies. Only the last two call for our attention.

The situation regarding privileges is summarized as follows in the preamble to the fifth *arrêté*:

The King in his Council has taken under consideration the petitions of many publishers both of Paris and of the provinces regarding the duration of privileges and the ownership of books. His Majesty recognizes that the privilege in the book trade

Grasset, ed., *Lettre sur le commerce de la librairie* (Paris, 1937); L. Brunel, "Observations critiques et littéraires sur un opuscule de Diderot," *RHL*, X (janv.-mars 1903), 1-24; Cristea, *ibid.*, pp. 123-127.

61. Falk, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-113; Cristea, *ibid.*, pp. 118-122; Coyecque, *op. cit.*, I, 142.

62. Falk, *ibid.*, pp. 113-123; Cristea, *ibid.*, pp. 130-135; Coyecque, *ibid.*, I, 143.

63. Laboulaye et Guiffrey, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-150.

is a favor based on justice and has as its aim, if it is granted to an author, to reward him for his labor; and, if it is obtained by a publisher, to assure him reimbursement for his investment and indemnity for his expenses. This difference in aims ought to produce a difference of duration. The author no doubt has a more assured right to a more extensive favor, whereas the publisher need not complain if his favor is proportioned to the amount of his investment and the importance of his enterprise. Perfection of the work, however, demands that the publisher be allowed to enjoy his favor during the lifetime of the author with whom he has dealt; but to grant a longer term would change the enjoyment of a favor into the ownership of a right and perpetuate a favor contrary to the tenor of the law which fixes its duration. This would be condoning a monopoly by making a publisher the sole judge of the price of a book. It would, finally, leave undisturbed the source of abuses and piracies by refusing to provincial printers a legitimate means of employing their presses. His Majesty believes that a regulation restricting the exclusive right of the publishers to the term indicated in the privilege, would be to their advantage; for a limited but certain enjoyment is preferable to an indefinite but illusory enjoyment. It should also be of advantage to the public, which ought to expect that as a result books would drop to a price proportionate to the means of those who want to buy them. It ought also to be favorable to literary men, who will be able after a given time to make notes and commentaries on an author without the possibility of any one's challenging their right to print the text. Finally this regulation will be generally useful in that it will increase the activity of the industry and stir up among all printers a competition favorable to the progress and perfectioning of their art.

The *arrêt* forbids the publication of contemporary books without a privilege. No one is to ask for a renewal unless the new edition contains at least twenty-five per cent of new material; but privileges for reprinting the original edition at the same time may be granted to other publishers. The term shall be not less than ten years or the life of the author. An author who obtains a privilege in his own name may sell his own books; he shall enjoy the privilege in perpetuity but if he sells it to a publisher the term shall be reduced to the author's lifetime. At the expiration of the privilege or the death of the author, the publisher may obtain permission to bring out one new edition; but a similar permission may be granted to other publishers. Permissions of this sort shall be granted upon the signature of the Director of the book trade; but he shall give every applicant a list of all former privileges for the book and of the number of authorized copies. Privileges shall be granted only to those who pay the established fees. Privileges shall be recorded within two months in the registers of the guild in the district where the publisher lives. In the case of those who have obtained privileges prior to this *arrêt*, Paris publishers shall within two months, and provincial publishers shall within three months, submit a list to De Néville, the maître des requêtes; and they shall then be granted a final privilege for each title. After such date those who have not submitted their lists need not hope for any renewals of privileges.

The sixth *arrêt* forbids the reprinting of any book, even after the expiration of the privilege, without permission. The owner of a privilege

may at his own risk, peril, and fortune, call in the aid of an inspector or a police commissioner to inspect shops and warehouses where he thinks he may find pirated copies of his own titles; but in case no such copies are found, the proprietor of the shop may collect damages from the publisher. Those who own editions pirated before the passage of this *arrêt* shall bring the copies to the guild chamber, where the warden and the inspector shall stamp the first page of each copy. Compliance with this provision shall relieve the pirating publisher of all liability for infraction of previous laws. After two months' interval any pirated editions found unstamped shall be considered new piracies, and the owner shall be subject to the regular penalties.

These two *arrêts* aroused immediate and bitter criticism. A group of publishers' widows, dressed in mourning, went to Fontainebleau to ask the Keeper of the Seals for a repeal. Protests were submitted by the guild, by the Rector of the University, and by various Academies. The two wardens of the Paris guild refused to stamp pirated editions and were thrown into the Bastille. Since there was no response from the Chancellery, the guild retained the advocate Cochut to draw up a petition to the King. Cochut's arguments were supported by two legal opinions, the first from the advocates of the Parlement, the second from a group of advocates of the Council.<sup>64</sup>

Cochut argues that a privilege is a combination of two elements: first, permission to print, based on the fact that the manuscript meets censorship requirements; second, assurance of protection from piracy. The manuscript itself carries an inalienable and natural right to make it public. The privilege merely regulates and protects the exercise of this natural right; it confers only the right to use the privilege itself. In the public interest the King may refuse a privilege or a renewal; but such refusal is a suspension of the owner's rights and not an excuse for the King to confiscate those rights and grant them to a third person. The natural right to publish may be transferred to a purchaser just as the natural right to use any other piece of property may be transferred; consequently the ownership of a privilege implies the right to an indefinite or perpetual series of renewals.

On the basis of these principles Cochut points out that the fifth and sixth *arrêts* go counter to the interests of authors, for author and publisher are interdependent and yet the publisher has the means and experience for manufacturing and selling that the author cannot afford to duplicate. Furthermore the whole history of the trade shows that publishers have always kept prices as low as possible and have resisted the pressure exerted by the rise in the general price level; and history also shows that competition has always been harmful to the book trade. Again, the retroactive character of the new laws is really an act of confiscation which will upset all sorts of contracts and disturb the public security. As for the

64. Renouard, op. cit., I, 173; Laboulaye et Guiffrey, *ibid.*, pp. 153, 159-220.

sixth *arrêt*, that is legalizing theft, and it opens the way to more widespread piracy than ever before.

The advocates of the Parlement and of the King's Council were emphatic in stating that there never was an occasion when the representations of petitioners were so clear and just. They stressed Cochut's arguments on every point, especially regarding the central idea of the inalienability of property rights and the danger in making these *arrêts* retroactive. They quoted the familiar legal maxim, *lex futuris non praeteritis dat formam negotiis*. Incidentally their memoirs give a most interesting picture of the complicated nature of the book trade, which shows how many publishing practices of our own day were perfectly familiar to businessmen of the eighteenth century.

In 1778 the publicist Linguet brought out a pamphlet against the *arrêts*.<sup>65</sup> Although he did not add anything very new to the discussion, his analysis is vigorous and clear-sighted. He upbraids the authors for their silence in the whole matter and points out that an author who neglects his due rewards is committing a crime against his family and his descendants. A privilege in the book trade is not at all like a patent of monopoly in, say, the textile industry. Such a patent does restrict the manufacture of a certain kind of cloth to one individual; but when La Fontaine was given exclusive rights to his *Fables*, no one else was forbidden to make wolves and lambs talk together if he wanted to. Ideas and style are the unique elements in a piece of literature, and they should be protected from piracy. A privilege, then, gives nothing to an author; it is merely a recognition of his property rights. Since these rights can never expire, the privilege ought to be perpetual. If you say that a good book belongs to the nation, you forget that the author and the publisher deserve rewards proportionate to their merit and success. As for the claims of the provincial publishers, it is enough to say that ambition and courage can find advantageous enterprises at the foot of the Pyrenees as well as on the banks of the Seine.

The winter of 1777-1778 saw the publication of three letters on the *arrêts*, written by the abbé Pluquet.<sup>66</sup> They are not profound documents, but they do summarize in clear, agreeable style the various arguments for the publishers. D'Héricourt's old, and by now threadbare, comparison of a manuscript to a house is repeated with variations. As for privileges he asks: "When the bailiff in my village every year just before harvest puts up a sign at my vineyard warning against the theft of grapes, does that sign confer on me the ownership of my grapes? Certainly not!" The abbé's chief objection was that the new laws attacked long-established traditional rights, that they violently and arbitrarily suppressed property ownership, and that they spelled only ruin for the trade and for authors.

In its sessions of 7 February and 23 July 1778 the Académie Française, though approving the *arrêts* in general, voted that the government should

65. Laboulaye et Guiffrey, *ibid.*, pp. 223-264.

66. *Ibid.*, pp. 267-358.

be more explicit on certain points.<sup>67</sup> The first is when an author, in order to avoid the trouble of selling his own books, leases to one or more publishers the right to bring out one or more editions only; in such cases the author should not be considered to have lost his privilege through temporary transfer to a publisher. In the second place, the government should define the term of a privilege for a work that extends to a number of volumes or that is likely to have a very slow sale. In the third place, it ought to be possible to make complaints of piracy in the usual judicial way and not in such risky fashion as the *arrêts* laid down.

The Academy's recommendations were the only comments to receive official notice. The Council on 30 July 1778 issued an *arrêt* embodying the three items,<sup>68</sup> the reason being frankly stated that these alone came from an unbiased source and were calculated to make the new laws more effective.

Nevertheless the protests continued and with a bitterness that sometimes descended to personalities. The publisher Leclerc, in a letter dated 19 December 1778 to De Néville,<sup>69</sup> the Director of the book trade, charges that the whole business is merely a plan to enrich the Director, who is not accountable to anyone for the new schedule of fees. He insists that the author has now been demoted from a position of respectability in the community and placed on a level with the tinker who has found a new method of plating kitchenware. The letter advances no new principles or arguments but it is interesting for its revelation of the attitude of the privileged publishers.

At the same time a number of friendly suits were instituted to test the law. One of these was an action of Paucon, author of a work called *Métrologie*, against the widow Desaint.<sup>70</sup> Some time before, she had bought the manuscript outright, paying a price based on the supposition that she would have perpetual ownership. When the new laws reduced her rights to ten years, she claimed that the contract had been changed and she refused to print the book or to continue instalments on the purchase price. On 11 August 1778 the Châtelet ordered execution of the contract and maintained her in full ownership with exclusive and permanent right to print and sell the work notwithstanding the provisions of the law. The Parlement confirmed this decision 10 February 1779.

The six *arrêts* had not been submitted to the Parlement for registration, and the next move of the publishers was to force some action by this body. Their situation was outlined to the court by d'Esprémenil on 23 April 1779. He summarized each of the laws and showed that the failure to observe some and the confusion caused by others had resulted in complete disruption of the trade. He also cited the various petitions offered by the publishers in explanation of their rights, questioned the justice of the new schedule of fees for privileges, and gave examples of several current lawsuits insti-

67. Cristea, op. cit., pp. 183-187.

68. Laboulaye et Guiffrey, op. cit., pp. 363-366; Isambert, op. cit., XXV, 370.

69. Laboulaye et Guiffrey, ibid., pp. 379-446.

70. Falk, op. cit., pp. 135-137; Cristea, op. cit., pp. 193-194; Renouard, op. cit., I, 180.

gated by the changes. The Parlement voted that the matter needed investigation and it therefore summoned the administration to present its side.<sup>71</sup>

The government was represented by Advocate-General Séguier, and the proceedings took place 10, 27, and 31 August 1779. His analysis was divided into three parts: first, a summary of the six *arrêts*; second, a summary of various petitions and memoirs, such as those of Cochut and Leclerc, and documents regarding the Paueton and other suits; third, a long and admirable history of French publishing that explains the nature and evolution of privileges.<sup>72</sup>

It must be admitted that Séguier's presentation is lacking in depth and originality. He does not have Cochut's penetration; he is quite unaware of the philosophical nature of property rights. He asserts that the *arrêts* of 1777 were the first to recognize literary proprietorship. The author's original ownership of his work has always been admitted. But when he sells his manuscript, he no longer owns anything real; he has only the merit and glory of being the creator of his book. The publisher has even less title to anything except the physical manuscript which he has bought. The same holds true of printed copies: as soon as a book is printed, the publisher has nothing to get except the price of the copies and the right to reprint for the term of the privilege. Author and publisher both renounce exclusive possession by the multiplication of copies. The purchaser of a book has a right to use his property as he wishes, to copy it by hand, even to print copies and sell them; but he cannot exercise this right as long as the privilege is in force because this is a royal safeguard to protect the author while he is getting paid for his work. On the other hand the publisher in buying the manuscript has acquired two things: the manuscript itself and the enjoyment of a privilege for a specified term. He cannot claim that hope of getting a renewal of the privilege played any part in the price he gave the author, because as a matter of fact the authors are a poor group and the publishers are a wealthy group. Now just as the author has a right not to publish his work, so the King is free to refuse permission to print it; and he does not need to renew the permission or to grant the renewal to the original publisher. The new laws recognize a distinction between author and publisher: the first is assured of a perpetual favor, the second is assured of it only for a limited time; the one gets more than he formerly did, the other gets less but not less than is due him.

At the end of these three long speeches, Séguier made some remarks that come dangerously near insubordination. He sketched out for the Parlement an arrangement that he thought would solve the difficulties of the trade far better than the new laws. He suggested a sort of national establishment that would buy manuscripts, fix prices with authors, make arrangements with printers, and take care of privileges and continuations. While this institution was being set up, he would have the government make an inventory of all literary property, issue continuations to cover the stocks on hand,

71. Laboulaye et Guiffrey, op. cit., pp. 463-483.

72. Ibid., pp. 484-596.

and put the new scheme into effect gradually. He insisted that these were his personal ideas, not official proposals.

At this point the Parlement took its annual vacation and did not return to a consideration of the subject until 25 July 1780. It then decided to present remonstrances to the King. But the committee appointed to draw up the remonstrances never made its report. In 1787 the Paris publishers sent a new memoir to the Chancellor showing that the new laws were ineffective and that business was ruined.<sup>73</sup> The government, overwhelmed with far more serious difficulties than the affairs of any single industry, paid no attention to the plea. Even after the beginning of the Revolution it continued as far as it could to carry out the existing regulations and especially to grant privileges.

The last privilege entered in the guild's registers is dated 27 July 1790. A month later La Harpe addressed the Constituent Assembly on conditions at the Comédie Française, and on 13 January 1791 the Assembly passed a decree, sponsored by Le Chapelier, embodying the main points of La Harpe's petition.<sup>74</sup> It recognized the rights of a dramatist to control the representation (not the publication) of a play during his lifetime and the continuance of the right in the person of his heirs or assigns for five years after his death. Thus the way was prepared for a decree of the Convention (19–24 July 1793) covering the publication of literary work. The vital point is in the first Article: "Authors . . . shall enjoy during their whole life the exclusive right to sell their works . . . and to transfer their ownership in whole or in part." The law now uses the word *right*. The protection of literary property no longer rests upon privilege or special favor; it is henceforth a *right* which the author can claim. The *privilège du roi* has become the *droit d'auteur*.

*Cambridge, Mass.*

73. *Ibid.*, pp. 599–616.

74. Cristea, *op. cit.*, pp. 226–239.

## THE SIXTH VOLUME OF SAINT-LAMBERT'S WORKS

By Herbert Dieckmann

TOWARDS the end of his life Saint-Lambert united his philosophic writings in a complete and final edition, which was published by H. Agasse under the title of *Œuvres philosophiques de Saint-Lambert*. Lanson in his *Manuel bibliographique de la littérature française moderne* and Quérard in *La France littéraire* list the edition as a collection of five volumes. It is this edition which is found in several libraries of this country. There existed however some time ago a sixth volume of Saint-Lambert's works. We learn about its existence from different sources, one of which is Saint-Lambert himself.

In the *chronique* of the sale of autograph letters in the *RHL* we find the following description of several letters by Saint-Lambert which were sold in the "Vente Panckoucke" (March 22-23, 1926):

Cinq lettres autographes de Saint-Lambert, la plupart datées de Sannois, an VII. (1798-1799). Une lettre est adressée au citoyen ministre François de Neufchâteau qui se montre favorable à la diffusion du 'Catéchisme universel'; les autres s'adressent à E. Agasse, imprimeur des *Œuvres philosophiques*, auxquelles l'auteur rattache divers opuscules qui avaient d'abord paru dans l'*Encyclopédie*; il revendique entre autres l'article sur le *Génie* qu'il vient de trouver réimprimé dans les *Œuvres de Diderot*.<sup>1</sup>

We learn from this entry that Saint-Lambert intended to join to his *Œuvres philosophiques* some articles which he had contributed to the *Encyclopédie*. These articles do not exist in any of the five volumes of the *Œuvres*. The reference to the article "Génie," which Saint-Lambert claims to have found reprinted in Diderot's works, is rather obscure. The only edition to which Saint-Lambert could have referred is that of Naigeon, and the article "Génie" is not in that edition.

The second source of information on the sixth volume is Brunet's *Manuel du libraire*,<sup>2</sup> here we learn that Saint-Lambert not only planned to include his contributions to the *Encyclopédie* in his *Œuvres*, but actually did so and that the volume containing these articles formed the sixth volume of his works. Brunet writes:

Au sujet de ce recueil [*Œuvres philosophiques*, 5 vols.] dont fait partie le *Catéchisme universel*, nous rapporterons la note suivante extraite de la *Biogr. univers.*, tome XL, p. 65, au bas de la deuxième col.: "Outre les 5 vol. du *Catéchisme universel* (il fallait dire des *Œuvres philosophiques*), il existe de cet ouvrage un tome VI (Paris, Agasse, 1797, in 8. de 388 pp.) avec le faux titre: *Œuvres philosophiques de Saint-Lambert*. Ce volume (qui n'est point le 6<sup>e</sup>, puisqu'il a été imprimé avant les cinq autres) contient: 1<sup>o</sup>. les treize articles que cet écrivain avait fournis à l'*Encyclopédie* (le premier est *Fantaisie*, et le dernier *Transfuge*); 2<sup>o</sup>. son discours de ré-

1. *RHL*, XXXIII (1926), 310.

2. Vol. V, item Saint-Lambert.

ception à l'Académie française, avec la réponse de l'évêque de Limoges, et celle de Saint-Lambert au discours de réception de Vicq d'Azyr; 3° ses *Mémoires pour servir à la vie du maréchal de Beauvau* (p. 233-386). Madame de Beauvau ne voulant pas, en 1797, que l'on parlât d'elle ni en bien ni en mal, acheta et détruisit la totalité de l'édition de ce 6<sup>e</sup> vol. On croit (mais à tort) qu'il n'existe que trois ou quatre exempl. de cette rareté bibliographique."

The note which Brunet transcribed and accompanied with critical remarks in parentheses is taken from the first edition (1825) of Michaud's *Biographie universelle*.<sup>3</sup> Strangely enough the quoted passage is not in the article "Saint-Lambert," but in that on "Bernardin de Saint-Pierre." Moreover it is hidden in a note to a note. The first part of the note contains a reference to Saint-Lambert and this reference leads in a second part to the paragraph on Saint-Lambert's works which we quoted above. In the first edition, note 24 refers to a previous note 18; in the second edition note 18 was dropped and note 24 thus seems a rather meaningless additon. Still more bewildering is the fact that the article on Saint-Lambert and that on Bernardin de Saint-Pierre were written by the same author. One wonders why he did not put the very important information on the sixth volume of Saint-Lambert's works in its proper place, at least in the second revised edition. Did the author have any doubt as to the authenticity of his information? It is certainly surprising that he gives no reference whatever as to the source of his information which, without Brunet's reference, might have remained lost in the Bernardin de Saint-Pierre article. Brunet also failed to give any evidence for some of his critical remarks.

Fortunately we find additional information on the question in a separate edition of one of the works which had been published in the strangely lost sixth volume. The *Mémoires pour servir à la vie du maréchal de Beauvau* were published again, though in a different form, in 1872, edited by the great-granddaughter of the maréchale de Beauvau, Madame Standish.<sup>4</sup> The second part of the volume, the *Mémoires du maréchal prince de Beauvau* is preceded by an "Avis sur ces Mémoires" which I reprint in full. Since the first part of the "Avis" is a quotation I have kept the quotation marks.

"A la fin de l'année 1793, M. de Saint-Lambert, voulant écrire la vie de M. le maréchal de Beauvau, dont il était le plus ancien ami, pria Mme la maréchale de Beauvau de lui donner des notes propres à l'aider dans son travail, et lui soumit ensuite ce même travail en lui demandant de le corriger: Madame de Beauvau examina le manuscrit et remarqua plusieurs inexactitudes et de nombreuses omissions dans la suite des faits qu'il contenait. M. de Saint-Lambert promit de profiter des notes et additions qu'elle lui remit, retravailla son ouvrage et le fit imprimer sans avoir égard à l'opinion de Mme de Beauvau, qui pensait que la vie, nullement

3. XL, 65, note 24. In the more current second edition the item is in XXXVII, 397, note 1.

4. *Souvenirs de la maréchale princesse de Beauvau, suivis des mémoires du maréchal prince de Beauvau, recueillis et mis en ordre par Madame Standish (née Noailles) son arrière-petite-fille* (Paris: Techener, 1872). Though the title combines the *Souvenirs* and the *Mémoires*, the work consists of two volumes.

historique et plus honorable que brillante d'un particulier, ne devait pas être exposée au jugement du public, à une époque où les esprits étaient occupés de grands intérêts. M. de Saint-Lambert donna une preuve de la décadence de ses facultés morales en s'opposant aux désirs de Mme de Beauvau et en se persuadant qu'il entendait mieux les intérêts de la mémoire de son ami, que la femme qui l'avait adoré quarante ans; l'ouvrage fut donc imprimé à la suite des œuvres de M. de Saint-Lambert, et allait être publié, lorsque Mme de Beauvau lui adressa contre cette publication de nouvelles réclamations, qui n'auraient eu aucun effet, si M. de Saint-Lambert n'était arrivé précisément alors à un degré d'affaiblissement d'esprit qui ne lui permettait plus l'exercice de sa volonté; à l'aide de M. Suard, l'édition entière des Mémoires de Beauvau fut retirée des mains du libraire Agasse et détruite, sauf cinq ou six exemplaires. Voici un de ces exemplaires conservés; il nous montre l'ouvrage de M. de Saint-Lambert, tel qu'il est sorti de ses mains, avec les incorrections de style, qui tenaient à la diminution de son talent, sa sécheresse, qui en avait toujours été le défaut, et les suppressions qu'exigeait l'époque de l'impression. Lorsque Mme de Beauvau se fut assuré l'édition de ces Mémoires, elle en confia un des exemplaires à M. Suard, y joignit ses nombreuses corrections et additions, et le pria de revoir tout le travail de M. de Saint-Lambert, de corriger les fautes contre la langue qui lui étaient échappées, d'abréger les détails de guerre et de refondre les additions dont il avait peu profité. La famille de M. le maréchal de Beauvau possède plusieurs copies manuscrites de l'ouvrage de M. de Saint-Lambert, corrigé par M. Suard, qui a suivi scrupuleusement les intentions de Mme de Beauvau, soit dans les suppressions, soit dans les additions qu'il a faites aux Mémoires, d'après les notes qui lui avaient été fournies."

After this quotation Madame Standish adds:

Cette notice a été écrite par M. le duc de Poix, petit-fils du maréchal de Beauvau, et elle est placée en tête d'un des cinq ou six exemplaires conservés de l'ouvrage de Saint-Lambert; cet exemplaire relié en maroquin citron fait partie de la bibliothèque du château de Mouchy.

Ce qui suit est l'ouvrage de Saint-Lambert revu et corrigé par M. Suard, d'après les notes de la princesse de Beauvau, et nous le publions sur un manuscrit dû à cette inconsolable compagne du prince, et *tout entier de sa main*.<sup>5</sup>

The "Avis" which was written by a member of the Beauvau family seems entirely trustworthy; it confirms all the essential details of the note in Michaud's *Biographie universelle*. However, in none of the sources of information quoted thus far have we found any documentary evidence of the destruction of the sixth volume of Saint-Lambert's works or of the *Mémoires* which it contained. A great number of details are still unknown and some assertions which were made by Brunet or the author of the note seem unfounded. One wonders for instance on what evidence Brunet based his remark that it was wrongly believed that only three or four copies of the sixth volume were still in existence. I have been able to find only one complete copy of Saint-Lambert's works; it is in the rare book collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale. The existence of this copy, which I shall describe below, does not seem to be generally known.

5. Op. cit., seconde partie, pp. 1-2.

During a recent stay in France I tried to find the sixth volume which contains the "Avis" written by the Duke of Poix. Though there is no reason to distrust the words of Madame Standish, a close examination of the volume appeared to be advisable. The whole story of the destruction had so many incredible features that it was necessary to establish some direct proof. Thanks to the courtesy of the present owner of the château de Mouchy I was able to find a number of documents which not only throw much light on the destruction of the sixth volume of Saint-Lambert's works, but give us the final proof that the account given by the Duke of Poix was based on facts.<sup>6</sup>

The sixth volume bound in "maroquin citron" apparently exists no longer in the château de Mouchy. It may have disappeared in the deplorable ravages which the castle suffered during the second world war; but there is—as the Duchess remarked—a possibility that the copy disappeared earlier. There exist however at Mouchy several manuscript copies of the *Mémoires* as well as that part of the sixth volume which comprises the *Mémoires*. The printed copy is covered with corrections by several hands and would make a very interesting object of study.

The copy of Saint-Lambert's works which the Bibliothèque Nationale owns is also bound in "maroquin citron," but does not have the "Avis" written by the Duke of Poix and shows no signs of ever having had it. In the sixth volume<sup>7</sup> the first two pages have carefully been cut out, so that there is no longer any indication of the author, publisher, place, or year of publication. The size of the pages of the volume, the print, the paper and the watermarks prove beyond doubt that this volume is part of the *Oeuvres philosophiques*. Its mutilation indicates that the volume was saved on purpose and with full knowledge of its compromising nature. Nothing in the volume substantiates Brunet's remark that the sixth volume was printed before the other five and I believe the assertion to be highly improbable. Saint-Lambert's works appeared in different years: volumes I, IV and V are dated "An IX"; volumes II and III, "An V." The date of publication does of course not indicate that the volumes were printed at that time, and plans for volumes I, IV, and V, may very well have existed before those for the last volume. The latter has no title page, but on the last page we find the customary notice: "Fin de la table des matières du sixième et dernier volume." In the "Discours préliminaire" to his works, which is at the beginning of the first volume, Saint-Lambert wrote: "MM. Diderot et D'Alembert

6. I take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to the Duchess of Mouchy and to her son for their great kindness, their warm and gracious reception, and their most helpful and untiring cooperation.

7. The contents of the sixth volume are as follows: *Articles de l'Encyclopédie: Fantaisie, Familiarité, Fragilité, Frivolité, Génie, Honnête, Honneur, Intérêt, Législateur, Louange, Luxe, Manière, Transfuge. Discours prononcé dans l'Académie Française, le samedi 23 juin 1770, à la réception de l'auteur. Réponse de l'ancien évêque de Limoges. Réponse de M. de Saint-Lambert, directeur de l'Académie, au discours prononcé par M. Vicq d'Azyr, à sa réception à l'Académie, le jeudi 11 décembre 1778. Mémoires pour servir à la vie du maréchal de Beauvau.*

associèrent à leurs travaux des hommes distingués par leurs lumières et par leurs talents. Quelques-uns d'entre eux n'ont point mis leurs noms aux articles qu'ils ont donnés; et en oubliant la gloire, ils ont été occupés de la perfection de l'esprit humain.<sup>8</sup> It is hardly plausible that Saint-Lambert wrote this remark for the preliminary discourse of the first volume of his works, if the sixth volume in which his contributions to the *Encyclopédie* are identified had been printed several years before the first volume.<sup>9</sup> The letters published below permit us to advance a reasonable conjecture as to the printing of the sixth volume. Since Madame de Beauvau was exceedingly worried about its publication and watched Saint-Lambert closely, we may assume that she soon discovered the fact of the printing. Since she reacted violently to Saint-Lambert's failure to keep his promise not to publish the *Mémoires* against her will, we may also assume that she took immediate steps to prevent the circulation of the volume. 1800 thus seems a plausible date for the sixth volume.

The first part of the correspondence published here deals with Madame de Beauvau's desire to prevent the publication of the *Mémoires*. Some of the letters are incompletely dated and some are not dated at all. I have grouped them according to the sequence of events which they describe; in a few cases it was difficult to reach a decision. One series of letters bears no signature whatever and nothing in the letters indicates who their author may be. We only learn that he was a friend of the Beauvau family, that he served as intermediary between Suard and Madame de Beauvau and that he was present when the question of the reconstitution of the French Academy was debated. At that occasion he was offered the choice between the *éloge* of the maréchal de Beauvau and that of Malesherbes. He chose the first, but someone else was asked to write and deliver the *éloge*. My attempts to establish the identity of the author by consulting the records of the Académie Française failed; there are no records for the period which concerns us here. The Academy was dissolved in 1793 and reconstituted in 1803. Paul Mesnard, in his *Histoire de l'Académie Française*,<sup>10</sup> gives a list of the persons present at the two reunions in which the reopening of the Academy was discussed and of the new members who were recommended for election. My attempts to identify the author of the letters to the maréchale de Beauvau by an examination of the handwritings of the persons listed by Mesnard failed since in many cases no sample of their handwriting could be found at the Bibliothèque Nationale or in other libraries of Paris.

Fortunately a second consultation of the collection of autograph letters at the château de Mouchy made it possible for me to solve the problem. Thanks to the untiring and ingenious assistance of the duchesse de Mouchy, who consulted the collection with me, I found a reference to Jean Devaines

8. Op. cit., I, 39-40.

9. I exclude from my argumentation Saint-Lambert's autograph letters to Agasse which were mentioned above; not all of them are dated.

10. (Paris, 1857) pp. 208-209.

(or De Vaines) in one of the collections. Devaines was one of the new members proposed for election at the second meeting of the Academy. He became a member in 1803. In the special collection of letters of its members which the Académie Française maintains, one finds one letter of Devaines, bearing his full signature. The writing of this letter is identical with the writing of the letters published below.

After this identification I found additional confirmation for the attribution of the letters. The "Fichier Charavay" which is now at the Bibliothèque Nationale contains a reference to a collection of nine autograph letters written by Saint-Lambert to Devaines.<sup>11</sup> The description of the letters reads as follows: "Intéressante correspondance inédite. Il [Saint-Lambert] parle de ses *Mémoires* qu'il est heureux de savoir entre les mains de De Vaines; il a en lui une extrême confiance, 'car soit pendant mon reste de vie, soit après ma mort je suis bien sûr qu'elle sera justifiée.'"

The following letters have been transcribed from a microfilm made in Paris. In the manner of presenting the letters I have followed the procedure of not altering the spelling or punctuation, except in a few, rare cases where the use of capitals was entirely arbitrary and where the total lack of punctuation marks made the understanding of the text very difficult. In those instances I have thought it advisable to use small letters and to add a semi-colon. Editorial comments have been limited to the strictly necessary.

Paris 7.<sup>for</sup> [an 8 ?]

Je n'ai sûrement pas, Madame, négligé l'exécution de vos ordres mais j'ai pensé qu'ils seroient mieux remplis par m<sup>r</sup> Suard oncle d'Agasse que par moi: il lui a écrit, ensuite il l'a vu, et me marque ce matin: *J'espere que nous épargnerons une peine à M<sup>de</sup> de B. et à m<sup>r</sup> de S<sup>r</sup> L. un mauvais procédé* ce n'est pas assez de l'espoir il faut la certitude et je n'épargnerai rien pour vous la procurer. Je vous en conjure ne vous retenez pas de me communiquer vos pensées sur ce triste sujet, je vous promets bien de ne pas me lasser sur toutes les démarches que vous jugerez propres à vous délivrer de ce tourment créé par un coupable radotage.

Je n'ai pas le tems d'entrer dans aucun détail sur les affaires; m<sup>de</sup> de P.<sup>12</sup> vous les contera mieux que je ne les écrirois; mais je ne puis finir sans vous rappeler le charme que j'ai goûté à jouir pendant 24<sup>h.</sup> de votre intimité et du regret si sensible que j'ai éprouvé en vous quittant.

[Devaines]

Paris 16. <sup>for</sup> [an 8 ?]

on me disoit, Madame, les petites voitures si sûres avec un port de 15°! Voila cependant le paquet perdu: ce n'est pas ma lettre que je regrette mais celles que vous

11. I should like to express my gratitude to Madame Dubief of the Département des Manuscrits who was so kind as to let me consult the entries on Saint-Lambert in the "Fichier Charavay."—On the article "Luxe" of the *Encyclopédie* the "Fichier Charavay" gives the following information: "Article Luxe, composé pour l'Encyclopédie; manuscrit autographe avec ratures et corrections, 22 p. in-folio." This information would seem to answer the questions concerning the authorship of the article.

12. Madame de Poix, daughter of the maréchal de Beauvau by his first marriage.

m'aviez envoyées pour les communiquer à m<sup>r</sup> S. et que je vous remettois: voilà qui est fait je ne me servirai plus de cette voie.

Vos éloges, Madame, sont bien doux à mon cœur car je les attribue beaucoup plus à votre sentiment qu'à votre excellent goût qui pour s'exercer exigeroit une impartialité dont je suis si satisfait que vous ne puissiez faire usage envers moi: vous êtes la maîtresse de prêter l'exemplaire à m<sup>me</sup> de P. à laquelle je me propose bien d'en offrir un.

Peut être que pour un quart de sa valeur m<sup>me</sup> de Poix auroit morlaix; m<sup>r</sup> de P. prend à cette consolation et dit qu'il trouveroit la somme nécessaire.

Je suivrai jusqu'à la décision absolue l'affaire si intéressante des mémoires et je demanderai si l'on peut avoir le Volume.

mon projet étoit d'aller encore vous renouveler mes homages et jouir de vos bontés, mais le mal au pied subsiste, de plus un rhume et je crains bien de ne pouvoir exécuter mon désir de tous les jours.

[Devaines]

Paris 3. Vend<sup>re</sup> an 9

J'ai envoyé hier, Madame, à m<sup>me</sup> de Poix une lettre pour vous. J'espere qu'elle vous sera parvenue.

Je vous remets celle de m<sup>r</sup> Suard qui étoit jointe à celle que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'écrire le mardi: je savois la teneur de l'engagement d'Agasse et je l'avois transcrit tel à peu près que vous le soulignez pour l'instruction de mon ami: malheureusement il n'a pu joindre le libraire et ce ne sera que dans 5 ou 6 jours qu'il sera de retour et qu'il fera les derniers efforts pour votre tranquillité: j'ai la conviction qu'elle ne sera pas troublée et que nous triompherons de l'avidité de l'imprimeur comme de la vanité de l'auteur.

ne craignez pas, madame, de me fatiguer de cette odieuse tracasserie, vous me donnez un témoignage précieux de confiance, et vous m'offrez l'occasion que je desire toujours de vous en donner une de mon dévouement: j'ai eu l'honneur de vous dire que lorsqu'il avoit été question de rétablir l'Academie françoise on m'avoit offert deux éloges celui de M. de Beauvau ou de M. De Malherbes: que j'avois choisi le premier comme un moyen d'exprimer publiquement et mes regrets pour lui et mes sentiments pour vous, et il est certain que ma seule peine en voyant ce projet manqué a été de ne pouvoir remplir un devoir si doux à mon cœur.

[Devaines]

Paris 19. 7<sup>bre</sup> 13

Pardonnes, Madame, si je réponds si tard à la lettre que vous m'avés fait l'honneur de m'ecrire; Je croyois inutile de vous dire que Je m'occuperois avec zèle de la commission que vous me donnés; j'espérois pouvoir vous annoncer plus promtement le résultat de mes démarches. Je partois pour la campagne au moment où j'ai reçu votre lettre; je n'ai eu que le tems d'ecrire a Agasse pour lui donner un rendez-vous a mon retour. Je suis revenu ici pour le voir et je l'ai trouvé absent. Je suis obligé d'aller rejoindre ma femme a la campagne ou je l'ai laissée, mais je la ramenerai ici le 22 et je ne perdrai pas un moment pour obtenir d'Agasse un arrangement qui vous affranchisse de toute inquietude.

13. This is probably the letter which Devaines mentions in his letter of the 3d vendémiaire.

Je vous avouerai, Madame, que je trouve quelque embarras à proposer à Agasse de remettre les exemplaires du volume où se trouvent les mémoires entre les mains d'un autre; c'est une marque de défiance qui de ma part le blesseroit indubitablement. C'est un homme très honnête mais un peu susceptible. Je le sonderai cependant sur ce point.

D'un autre côté j'aurois de la peine à vous voir chargée du prix de l'édition entière de ce volume. Ce seroit une affaire de cent louis au moins. Je voudrois bien vous épargner, madame, une dépense si considérable et si gratuite; et j'espere trouver un moyen de satisfaire votre désir à moins de frais.

Vous servir, Madame, dans une chose qui interresse votre tranquillité seroit pour moi un bien d'un prix infini. Je voudrois bien aussi rendre à la mémoire de M. de Beauvau un hommage digne du sentiment que je conserve de son estime et de ses bontés.

Recevés, Madame, l'hommage de mon respect et de mon dévoûment

Suard

Paris 4 Pluviose an 9

Je sentirai toujours, Madame, jusqu'au fonds de mon cœur le contre coup de vos peines: j'en joins une personnelle à la vôtre: la perte de m<sup>r</sup> D'invan m'est douloureuse, il m'avoit constamment témoigné une bienveillance particulière. Son cœur étoit bon, son esprit excellent, son commerce d'autant plus aimable qu'on l'espéroit moins de son gout pour la vie solitaire; il jouissoit de votre intimité, vous étoit tendrement attaché, et voila encore un vrai motif de regrets.

J'ai communiqué votre lettre à m<sup>r</sup> Suard, il en est bien reconnoissant mais il vous prie de vous bien tranquilliser sur son compte: M<sup>r</sup> de S<sup>t</sup> L lui a écrit: *on a voulu nous brouiller mais je ne le veux pas* et leurs relations vont comme à l'ordinaire.

au reste nous pensons tous deux, qu'il n'y a rien à faire vis à vis d'Agasse, qu'on n'en seroit pas plus sûr par des dons directs ou indirects, qu'il a juré qu'il ne laisseroit sortir de son magasin aucun exemplaire; qu'il n'en remettoit même pas un à l'auteur. m<sup>r</sup> Suard ajoute qu'on peut se confier dans sa probité, ainsi, Madame, je vous prie de faire reprendre chez moi les 1200<sup>ii</sup> et surtout de ne pas vous livrer à l'inquiétude.

agréez l'hommage de mon tendre et profond respect.

[Devaines]

Madame

Lorsque j'ai été instruit, pour la première fois, du désir que vous aviez que les Mémoires de M<sup>r</sup> Le Maréchal de Beauvau ne fussent pas publiés, et que l'édition en fut même supprimée, je me serais empressé de vous en faire le sacrifice, si j'avais pu me permettre de disposer de l'ouvrage de M<sup>r</sup> de S<sup>t</sup> Lambert sans son consentement, et vous savez, Madame, combien il étais éloigné d'y consentir.

Aujourd'hui que je puis disposer d'un ouvrage qui est devenu ma propriété, sans faire aucun tort à la mémoire de l'auteur, je me trouve heureux, Madame, de pouvoir satisfaire à votre vœu. J'ai, donc, l'honneur de vous envoyer tous les exemplaires de la partie du sixième volume des œuvres de S<sup>t</sup> Lambert, qui contient les Mémoires de M<sup>r</sup> de Beauvau. Vous auriez reçu plutôt les exemplaires, si les circonstances m'avaient permis d'en faire faire le triage plus promptement.

J'aurais désiré aussi, Madame, qu'il me fut permis de vous faire un sacrifice entier et désintéressé, mais M<sup>r</sup> Suard n'a pas voulu consentir à ce que je vous rendisse

cet hommage qu'il m'eut été agréable de vous offrir; et j'ai fait ceder mon sentiment à des convenances que je dois respecter.

Je suis avec respect

Madame

Votre très humble et très obeissant serviteur.

L. Agasse

Paris ce 20 Ventose an 11 (11 Mars 1803.)

Paris 20 ventose 11 mars

Madame de Beauvau prie Monsieur Agasse de recevoir tous ses remerciemens; sa juste délicatesse sur l'ouvrage qui lui avoit été confié ne doit lui laisser aucune inquiétude, l'intention de la malheureuse veuve de Monsieur de Beauvau et celle de sa fille Madame de Poix n'ifiant jamais été d'anéantir ce monument honorable de l'amitié de M<sup>r</sup> de S<sup>t</sup> Lambert pour l'objet de leurs regrets; Monsieur Agasse peut se rappeler que M<sup>r</sup> de S<sup>t</sup> Lambert étoit convenu que ces mémoires ne paroient que *deux ans apres sa mort*, il avoit précédemment promis à M<sup>de</sup> de Beauvau d'en revoir avec elle les épreuves, ce qu'il n'a pas fait et avant de tomber dans le malheureux état qui n'a cessé qu'avec sa vie il lui avoit envoié deux exemplaires des mémoires pour qu'elle y fit tous les changemens qu'elle et M<sup>de</sup> de Poix jugeroient convenables. ils sont indispensables, non seulement par des motifs de convenance, mais encore pour rectifier des inexactitudes qui nuiroient au succès de l'ouvrage; ces changemens sont commencés, un ami vouloit bien les achever; si sa perte si douloureuse pour M<sup>de</sup> de Beauvau la prive de cette précieuse ressource elle espère encore qu'elle pourra retrouver dans un autre ami de la mémoire de M<sup>r</sup> de Beauvau, et qui veut bien qu'elle le compte aussi dans le petit nombre de ceux qui lui restent, la volonté de suppléer à ce qu'elle craint de perdre.

Lorsque ces mémoires seront tels qu'ils doivent être, ils seront remis à Monsieur Agasse pour être joints au 6<sup>me</sup> volume des œuvres de M<sup>r</sup> de S<sup>t</sup> Lambert et publiés à l'époque qui sera convenue entre Monsieur Agasse et la veuve et la fille de celui qui en est l'objet.

M<sup>de</sup> de Beauvau prie Monsieur Agasse de recevoir l'assurance de sa reconnaissance de son estime et de tous les sentimens que ses procédés pour elle lui ont inspirés pour lui.

[no signature]

The last letter which is not signed, but which evidently was either written or dictated by Madame de Beauvau, concludes the first phase of the correspondence about the sixth volume of Saint-Lambert's works. All the letters published thus far are self-explanatory. Though the correspondence is not complete we can follow without difficulty the various stages of the sometimes rather dramatic events. At one point it seems that either Suard or Agasse informed Saint-Lambert of the steps taken by Madame de Beauvau to prevent the publication of the *Mémoires*. From Saint-Lambert's remark, which Devaines quotes, we learn that Saint-Lambert too was won over by the perfect fairness and the admirable conduct of both Suard and Agasse. The latter two appear in a very favorable light, so that the correspondence has even independently from its literary and historical significance an appealing human interest.

Only one point deserves special mention: Agasse handed over only that part of the sixth volume which contained the *Mémoires*. We have no indi-

cation of what happened to the other part. As far as I was able to ascertain, it was never published separately and may have been destroyed in the end.

The second part of the correspondence, which all belongs to the year 1806, deals with the revision of Saint-Lambert's *Mémoires* by Madame de Beauvau and Suard. Both Saint-Lambert and Devaines had died in 1803. We find the maréchal's wife as determined as ever to present her husband in the light in which she wanted the public to see him. Her sorrow over his death was sincere and deep and lasted over many years until her death. However, one cannot help feeling that, at least as its literary expression is concerned, it has something forced and impersonal. It seems to a certain extent a wilfully maintained attitude, lifeless and a trifle conventional.

Lundi a 8 h. du soir

Je me proposois, Madame, d'avoir l'honneur de vous remettre moi même le porte-feuille que vous m'avés confié. Un peu d'indisposition et le mauvais tems me retiennent chez moi.

Je ne me dissimule pas que j'ai quelque reproche a me faire sur l'air de negligence que je me suis donné a vos yeux; mais, Madame, vous m'avés paru vous même si peu pressée de voir paroître les *Mémoires* que vous m'avés chargé de revoir, le libraire l'est si peu aussi que ma paresse a pu s'en autoriser; mais je vous proteste que la véritable raison qui a suspendu le petit travail que j'ai a faire, c'est la difficulté que je trouve a ajouter quelque chose aux observations si touchantes et si bien exprimées que vous avés écrites, a mêler mes idées a l'ouvrage d'un autre, et par dessus tout a concilier ce qu'exige votre excessive modestie a ce que me semblent exiger et la mémoire que vous voulés honorer et le sentiment naturel de celui qui veut aussi lui rendre un si légitime hommage. J'espere, Madame, que ma negligence apparente ne vous engagera pas a me retirer une confiance qui m'honore et me touche sous plusieurs raports.

Recevés, Madame, l'hommage de mon respect et de mon dévouement

Suard

Copie de la lettre de Mad<sup>e</sup> la Ma<sup>s<sub>e</sub></sup> de Beauvau à M<sup>r</sup> Suard.

S<sup>e</sup> Germain en Laye ce 9 7<sup>me</sup> 1806

Je me reproche M<sup>r</sup> de vous occuper trop longtems d'un intérêt que vous avez bien voulu partager, mais qui ne peut être que pour moi une pensée de tous les moments; sans désirer que les mémoires paraissent promptement, et préférant même (si j'en avais le choix) qu'ils ne parussent que lorsque je serai réunie à celui qui en est l'objet, je n'en souhaite pas moins de les voir plus dignes de lui et même de leur auteur.

Je desire donc M<sup>r</sup> d'essayer de faire moi même ces corrections et ces changements que vous avez senti comme moi être nécessaires, l'extrême intérêt suppléera peut-être à ce qui me manque pour le bien faire.

Je vous prie donc M<sup>r</sup> de vouloir bien remettre à la personne qui vous rendra cette lettre, le dépôt que vous aviez bien voulu recevoir; je vous demande aussi d'être bien persuadé que je conserverai toujours le souvenir et la reconnaissance de l'intérêt avec lequel vous avez reçu cette marque de ma confiance. Vous savez M<sup>r</sup> quel prix je mets à vos sentiments, je puis les mériter par ceux qui m'attachent à vous depuis si longtems.

The following letter of Suard is written on stationery of the *Institut National, Classe de la langue et de la littérature françaises. Le secrétaire perpétuel de la classe.* The letter is undated.

Madame Beauvau me fait sentir tous les remords de ma negligence a son egard et je les sens vivement.

Je réclame encore son indulgence et je la prie de me laisser encore son portefeuille jusqu'à dimanche.

Je vais mettre en ordre les remarques que j'ai faites sur l'ouvrage de M de S<sup>t</sup>. L. et les faire transcrire.

Dimanche sans faute je remettrai mon travail tel qu'il sera a la personne que Madame Beauvau voudra bien charger de le recevoir.

Je suis honteux, affligé et tourmenté du sentiment de ma negligence a l'egard de la personne du monde dont l'estime et la bonté ont pour moi le plus de prix; mais je la suplie de croire que mes retards ne sont pas pure négligence. La difficulté de faire ce que j'aurois voulu m'a paralysé la main.

J'espere que Madame de Beauvau rendra justice a mon respect et a mon devouement pour sa personne, a mon vif et constant interet pour la memoire du digne objet de ses regrets et de ses pensées.

Suard

Paris jeudi 11. 7<sup>bre</sup>

Je n'ai pas eu besoin, Madame, de tout le délai que je vous ai demandé. Mon travail est fini. Quand vous l'aurez examiné et corrigé, la copie peut être envoyée à l'impression. Mais ce que j'ai fait n'est pas tout ce que j'aurois voulu faire. L'ouvrage de S<sup>t</sup>. Lambert se ressent de l'affoiblissement de sa tête. Il est en general écrit d'un style negligé, souvent incorrect, en phrases décousues et de formes monotones qui rebutent. J'y ai fait beaucoup de corrections de détail, mais il faudroit récrire des pages entières et je ne puis pas me le permettre. Il faut que ce soit l'ouvrage de S<sup>t</sup>. Lambert.

Je trouve trop de détails militaires, qu'il faudroit peut-être resserrer, vu l'esprit du tems présent.

Je me suis soumis a l'extrême delicatesse qui vous fait rejeter des éloges, qui devoient entrer nécessairement dans les mémoires de votre illustre et vertueux ami, et qui étoient commandés par le sentiment et la situation de M. de S<sup>t</sup>. Lambert.

Mais en respectant une modestie qui peut me paraître excessive, ne permettrés vous pas, Madame, qu'on imprime une courte note, au nom de l'Editeur, dans laquelle on dira qu'on a supprimé dans les mémoires quelques traits, qui regardoient les deux personnes qui tenoient de plus pres a M. de B. et qui lui étoient le plus chères, mais qu'on a du céder a une modestie aussi noble que delicate, qui a exigé ce sacrifice. Cela me paraît nécessaire pour tout concilier.

Je suis prêt, Madame, à remettre votre portefeuille a la personne que vous chargerez de venir le prendre.

Pardonnez moi, Madame, de vous avoir fait attendre si longtems un travail qui meritoit si peu d'être attendu, mais je dois vous repeter encore que le désir de faire

mieux que je ne pouvois a été plus qu'une vraye negligence la cause d'une lenteur, que je me reprocherai cependant toujours.

Je vous renouvelle, Madame, l'hommage de mon respect et de mon eternel dévouement.

Suard

Paris dimanche 14. 7<sup>bre</sup>

J'ai l'honneur de vous renvoyer, Madame, les mémoires de S<sup>t</sup> Lambert avec les pieces qui y sont relatives. Je desire plus que je n'espere que vous soyés un peu contente d'un travail dont je le suis bien peu. Je recevrai votre avis et vos observations avec le desir de faire tout ce qui pourra vous satisfaire sur cet objet.

Je n'ai fait aucun usage du petit memoire, tres touchant et tres bien écrit, qui est joint aux autres pieces. M. de Boufflers<sup>14</sup> en a bien profité. Il y a une ou deux pages a la fin que l'on pourroit employer en note a l'impression. Quant aux traits qu'on pourroit ajouter au caractere de M. de B. vous seule, Madame, pouvés les choisir et en fixer la place.

La lettre de Marmontel est aussi tres bonne a imprimer en appendice.

Je me propose d'aller a S<sup>t</sup> Germain pour prendre vos ordres. Je vous suplie de croire que je ne mettrai aucun delai a les exécuter, et qu'au desir constant de vous montrer mon zèle je joins un besoin de réparer qui me tourmente.

Mon respect et mon dévouement sont sans bornes

Suard

Copie de la lettre de Mad<sup>e</sup> la M<sup>me</sup> de Beauvau à M<sup>r</sup> Suard.

S<sup>t</sup> Germain 16 7<sup>bre</sup> 1806

Je vous renouvelle M. tous mes remerciements; j'adopte vos observations mais le mauvais état de ma tête ne me permet pas dans ce moment de vous proposer celles que j'y pourrais joindre; je vais a la fin de cette semaine passer quelques jours seule au Val, c'est un besoin que je n'ai pu satisfaire depuis mon retour a S<sup>t</sup> Germain, c'est là que j'espère pouvoir m'en occuper; je serais bien fâchée que vous prissiez la peine de venir ici; je compte faire un petit voyage à Paris dans le mois prochain et en profiter pour vous répéter mes remerciements. Vous me dites, M<sup>r</sup> que quand j'aurai examiné et corrigé, la copie peut être envoyée à l'impression. Vous savez que je n'en suis pas pressée, je ne l'étais que d'être sûre que ces mémoires seraient dignes d'être connus et je ne puis tirer cette confiance que de vous.

Une seule de vos observations M. ne peut avoir mon consentement, c'est celle d'ajouter une courte note au nom de l'éditeur, dans laquelle on dira qu'on a supprimé etc.; tout ce qui peut me prouver l'estime que vous voulez bien m'accorder, me touche et m'honore également, mais je ne puis me trouver à ma place ni avec justice, ni avec convenance, que dans l'article que j'ai changé par ma note; ma chère belle fille pense de même sur ce qui la regarde.

14. A friend of the Beauvau family who was given preference over Devaines in the matter of the eulogy of the maréchal de Beauvau.

Une autre remarque que je vous soumets; il me semble que ces mémoires destinés à terminer l'ouvrage de M. de S<sup>t</sup> Lambert ne doivent point avoir d'éditeur particulier; il me paraît aussi qu'il faut leur laisser la date de l'année où ils ont été composés, et c'était en 1794. Vous avez squ M<sup>r</sup> que c'était malgré moi, et malgré la promesse qu'il m'en avait faite que M. de S<sup>t</sup> Lambert voulut les publier; sa première pensée n'ayant été que de les faire servir à *ma consolation comme à la sienne*. S'il n'en avait pas donné à mon insq<sup>ue</sup> plusieurs exemplaires, j'aurais fait tout mon possible pour qu'ils ne parussent pas; c'est à vous M. que j'espère devoir que ce soit du moins d'une manière plus convenable, sans désirer que ce soit promptement.

Je ne puis assez vous dire combien je suis touchée des reproches que vous voulez bien nous faire, ni vous dire assez combien je suis reconnaissante des sentiments dont vous voulez bien m'assurer. Recevez M. l'assurance de tous ceux qui m'attachent bien tendrement à vous.

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*Harvard University*

DIE EINHEIT VON FOUQUÉS UNDINE  
AN UNPUBLISHED ESSAY IN GERMAN  
BY JEAN GIRAUDOUX

By Laurence LeSage

En 1909, Charles Andler, qui dirigeait les études de littérature allemande à la Sorbonne, chargea son étudiant Jean Giraudoux de lui apporter, la semaine suivante, un commentaire d'*Ondine*. Une excursion à Robinson, puis un siècle et une carrière particulièrement occupés ont retardé jusqu'à cette année (1939) ce commentaire qui a pris, grâce à Louis Jouvet, la forme d'une pièce, et qui est donc dédié, comme le fut *Siegfried*, à la mémoire de ce maître. (Jean Giraudoux, in a program note for *Ondine*.)

ALTHOUGH it is probably true that Giraudoux never presented his essay to Professor Andler, he did write one, for a manuscript entitled *Die Einheit von Fouqué's Undine* has been preserved among the author's papers.<sup>1</sup> The document is of double interest: not only have we here one of the earliest specimens of Giraudoux's ventures into criticism, but a heretofore unavailable means of approach to one of his major creative works.<sup>2</sup> After reproducing the text as faithfully as possible (without attempting to correct or even make note of Giraudoux's mistakes in German), I should like to comment, first upon the essay as a criticism of Fouqué, and secondly upon Giraudoux's *Ondine* in the light of this essay.

*Die Einheit von Fouqué's Undine*

Nur ein einziges Mal zweifelte Fouqué an dem Erfolg eines seiner Romanen; und das war als er an *Undine* schrieb. "Fouqué, schreibt Koch in seiner Einleitung, soll gerade bei dem erfolgreichsten seiner Werke während der Arbeit Zweifel an ihrer Tauglichkeit gehabt haben." Man darf auch nicht vergessen, dass verschiedene Zeitgenossen durchaus nicht mit der Ausführung der Novelle zufrieden waren. Goethe zum Beispiel sagte: "Freilich war es ein guter Stoff und man kann nicht einmal sagen, dass der Dichter alles daraus gemacht hätte, was darinnen lag." Auch Rahel findet sich in der Entwicklung des Plans gar nicht zurecht. Welche Fehler mögen den Eindruck bei diesen sachkundigen Richter gestört haben? Bei dieser Erzählung erscheint doch alles, mit Ausnahme des Stils, einfach und klar. Ihr eigentümlicher Reiz liegt sogar in einer gemessenen, nicht zu verleugnenden Einheit. Diese Klarheit ist aber nur äußerlich. Wenn man sich nicht mit einer ersten Lektüre begnügt, und etwas mehr in die Absichten des Dichters und in deren Ausführung eindringt, steht man einem sehr verwickelten Problem gegenüber: Trotz der Verwirrung des Plans herrscht immer der Eindruck dieser Einheit, von der wir eben sprachen. Wir möchten eben jetzt diese Einheit erklären und bestimmen. Sie kann aus zwei Elementen stammen, erstens aus dem Stoff, und wir werden in einem ersten Teil untersuchen, ob wir es mit einer consequent durchgeföhrt

1. The manuscript was microfilmed with the gracious permission of M. Jean-Pierre Giraudoux. So far as I know, the essay exists only in this rough draft, with numerous cross-outs, additions, and corrections.

2. *Ondine, pièce en trois actes d'après le conte de Frédéric de la Motte Fouqué* (Grasset, 1939).

Erzählung, mit folgerichtig entwickelten Charakteren und Handlung zu tun haben. Im andern Fall kann sie sich auch nur aus dem Ton, aus der Farbengebung herausbilden und wir werden sie in den zwei Hauptanregern der Phantasie Fouqué's, in den phantastischen und in den romantischen Elementen suchen.

Die Antwort auf unsere erste Frage werden wir bekommen, wenn wir Untersuchungen darüber anstellen, wie Fouqué die Grundlagen, die verschiedenen Grundgedanken der Schriften bearbeitete, die ihn zur Behandlung dieses Stoffes veranlassten. Er hatte zwischen zwei Plänen die Wahl. Wenn er die Ideen von Paracelsus und Böhme beibehalten wollte, so war seine Aufgabe, das Leben eines Elementargeistes unter den Menschen zu schildern. In den Volkshelden und Volksbüchern andererseits, in der Sage von den Seejungfern oder dem Märchen vom Ritter im Staufenberg kommt der Gedanke eines Liebeskampfes zwischen der Frau und der Nixe zum Vorschein. Im ersten Fall die Überraschungen und die Schmerzen eines ahnungslosen Wesens, das in ein neues Element versetzt wird. Im zweiten, der Streit zwischen erlaubter und verbotener Liebe, zwischen Gut und Böse, zwischen Kätzchen und Kunigunde.<sup>3</sup> Wenn man aber jetzt die Undine mit ihren beiden Quellen vergleicht, so bemerkst man, dass die zwei Probleme sich ganz und gar verflüchtigt haben. Das Problem der Seele zunächst ist sehr äußerlich und verwischt. Die Wasserfrau wird wohl einer Seele teilhaftig, wir erfahren aber kaum, wie sie diese Gottesgabe benutzt; vom Umgang mit den andern Menschen, mit Mann und Freundin; vom Leben auf dem Schloss, (Die Antwort auf unsere erste Frage gibt uns die äußerlichste Untersuchung: Es gibt in der Handlung keine—und—<sup>4</sup>, und in der Schilderung der Charakter keine Folgerichtigkeit.)<sup>5</sup> von der allmählich eintretenden Veränderung im Verhältnis des Ritters zu der schönen Undine, hören wir soviel wie gar nichts. Wir werden ohne Übergang, von der Flitterwoche in den Tod versetzt. Fouqué hat sich selbst, im Anfang des dreizehnten Kapitels wegen dieses Ausbleibens der ursprünglichen Grundlagen entschuldigt: "Der diese Geschichte aufschreibt, weil sie ihm das Herz bewegt und weil er wünscht, dass sie auch anderen ein Gleiches tun möge, bittet dich, lieber Leser, um eine Gunst. Sieh es ihm nach, wenn er jetzt über einen ziemlich langen Zeitraum mit kurzen Worten hingehnt und dir nur im allgemeinen sagt, was sich darin begeben hat. Er weiß wohl, dass man es recht kunstgemäß und Schritt für Schritt entwickeln könnte, wie Huldrands Gemüt begann sich von Undinen ab, und Bertalden zuzuwenden, wie Bertalda dem jungen Mann mit glühender Liebe immer mehr entgegen kam . . . man könnte dies alles, weiß der Schreiber, ordentlich ausführen, vielleicht sollte man's auch . . . Damit sei es aber auch genug; wir wollen uns nicht mit tausendfach vereinzelten Stichen das Herz durchprickeln, sondern nur kurz dabei bleiben, dass es nun einmal so gekommen war, wie ich vorhin sagte." Auf diese Weise hat sich Fouqué die Mühe gespart, den Schauer, der den Ritter von Undine wegtrieb, zu erklären. Undine ist übrigens kein Elementargeist mehr. Nichts in ihrem Körper und ihrer Natur erinnert uns daran, dass wir es mit einem Urgeist zu tun haben.

Grüß vor allem mit Vertrauen  
Die lieben schönen deutschen Frauen,  
ich weiß, sie haben dich gern,

3. *Kätzchen von Heilbronn.*

4. Blank spaces in text.

5. The sentence is an insertion.

sagt Fouqué zu seiner Heldin. Dieses Vertrauen und diese Liebe der deutschen Frauen kam, daß Undine zu ihnen gehörte. Undine ist wie Eugénie, wie Bertha, nur ein wunderschönes Blondchen, und dem Ritter würde nicht einfallen, dass sie zu den Nixen gehört, wenn ihr aufrichtiges und deutsches Gewissen sie nicht zu einem Geständnis getrieben hätte. In 15 Jahren haben das die Eltern nicht erraten und zu der Zeit waren die Ritter nicht viel klüger als die Fischerleute. Der fromme Fouqué hat nicht gewagt, mit der nassen Haut, mit den mit Schuppen und Schwimmhaut versehenen Beinen, mit den meergrünen Augen das getaufte Mädchen zu versehen. Sie braucht nicht das Haus zu verlassen, wie Melusine, am Sonnabend. Auch den Charakter der Wasserfrau hat Undine eingebüßt. Sie ist wahrscheinlich viel zu früh dem Einfluß der Wassergeister entrückt worden, und fühlt sich auf der festen Erde so gut zu Hause, dass sie sich von Anfang an der Verwandschaft mit dem Oheim schämt. In den ersten Kapiteln ist sie nichts anderes als ein halb verwöhntes halb scheues Stadtkind, das bei der Amme großgezogen wurde. Ihren Neckereien liegt nur ein stolzer und freier Charakter zu Grunde. Alles was sich Undine ohne Seele herausnimmt, Wasserguß gegen die Scheiben, schlagfertige Antworten, erlauben sich auch die mit Seele versehenen Mädchen. Eine Königstochter darf Fischerleute zum Besten haben. Fouqué hat sich bemüht, die bekannte Nixenwildheit und Unsitthlichkeit herauszuheben. Dies ist ihm aber vollkommen mißlungen. Daß Undine mit rothen Wangen dem Ritter entgegentritt, vor ihm keinen Knicks macht, darf nicht auffallen, wenn man bedenkt, dass sie zum ersten Male einem jungen Mann begegnet. Dass sie ihm ihre Perlenzähne scharf in die Finger setzt, verstößt auch nicht so sehr gegen die romantische Moral. Solche Charakter haben wir schon anderweitig gefunden. Bei den Nixen nicht, sondern bei allen verliebten Backfischen der Romantik; in Ponce de Leon und auch in Fouqué's Zauberring. Undine scherzt mit der Ironie der kleinen Marie: "Wenn ich euch nicht gebissen hätte, wer weiß, was noch alles von der Bertalda in eurer Geschichte vorgekommen wäre," und sie freut sich wie die Leserinnen Fouqué's an Ritterabenteuern. Der Kampf aber um die Seele, das Leiden mit der Liebe vermissen wir vollkommen.

Zweitens, Fouqué hat sich meines Erachtens nicht entschlossen, einen Kampf zwischen Gut und Böse, Nixe und Frau zu schildern. Auf welcher Seite steht das Recht? Soll Bertalda die Rolle der bösen Frau vertreten; dann hat sie Fouqué in ein viel zu gutes Licht gestellt. Weder körperlich, noch moralisch, ist Bertalda der Freiin Kunigunde ähnlich. Sie ist jung, schön; den Stempel der bösen Mächte trägt sie nicht an sich. Nach der Erzählung, würde sie uns vielmehr das Käthchen wieder ins Gedächtnis rufen. Sie ist ein Käthchen, die umgekehrte Schicksale erlebt, das aus einer Königstochter zu einer Schmiedestochter wird, und dessen Liebe sich durch die Veränderungen und Schicksalsschläge hindurch aufrecht hält. Wie das Käthchen muß sie jahrelang zwischen ihrer Nebenbuhlerin und ihrem Ritter leben, ohne ein Wort der Liebe zu sagen oder zu hören. Wie das Käthchen fühlt sie sich in ihrer Herzenstiefe verletzt, weil der Ritter eine menschliche Liebe verschmäht, und so blind ist, mit einem hexenhaften Wesen zu leben. Käthchen weint und schweigt still, als sie das badende Frauenzimmer erblickt hat; Bertalda wundert sich sehr darüber, "wie der Ritter gegen ein Wesen so verliebt und freundlich that, welches ihr seit der letzten Entdeckung, mehr gespenstisch als menschlich vorkam." Uebrigens lebt sie mit Undinen in Eintracht; alles was sie sich der Hausfrau gegenüber herausnimmt, kommt nicht von ihrer Liebe zu dem Ritter, sondern wie Fouqué sagt, von einem blendischen [sic] eitlen Sinn, und ihrer Herrschaftsucht. Ihre Demut und Reumütigkeit drückt sich in rührender Ein-

fachheit aus: "Ich fühle mit Beschämung, wie ich nur eine arme Fischerdirne bin. Daß ich es auf Augenblitze vergaß, will ich in der ärmlichen Hütte meiner Eltern büßen. Lebt wohl mit Eurer schönen Frau." Die beiden Stellen, in denen Bertalda und Kätschen ihre Liebe eingestehen, sind nicht ohne Ähnlichkeit: "mit schmeichelnden Worten, sagt Fouqué, schalt er sie um ihr trotziges Flüchten, mit Demut und Rührung entschuldigte sie sich, und aus allem was sie sprach, leuchtete es hervor, gleich einer Lampe, die dem Geliebten zwischen Nacht und Geheimnis kund giebt: die Geliebte harre noch sein." Es ist nicht mehr hier der Kampf der Nixe und der Frau, wir haben es vielmehr mit zwei Kätschen zu tun, und zweimal hat uns Fouqué getäuscht, indem er sich an keine Grundlage streng anschloß und beide vermischt. Gegen diesen Fehler wenden sich vielleicht die Worte von Rahel: "Fouqué habe sich im Stoff vergriffen, drei einander widersprechende Pläne, von denen jeder einzelne eine berühmte Fiktion werden müßte, schädigten den Eindruck." Fouqué hat den Fehler bemerkt und er versucht ihm abzuhelfen indem er eine neue, fremde Gestalt in die unzusammenhängende Erzählung einführte, die er die Handlung führen ließ. So erschuf er Kühleborn. Dieser tritt aus dem Hintergrund in den Vordergrund, sobald die Handlung festere Form anzunehmen beginnt; er allein übernimmt, da Undine zu der feindlichen Partei übergegangen ist, an ihrer Stelle und ihr zum Trotz den Kampf. So dass das wirkliche Thema der Novelle nicht ein Kampf zwischen Bertalda und Undine ist, sondern ein Kampf zwischen dem Ritter, seiner lieben Frau und seiner lieben Freundin einerseits und Kühleborn andererseits. Die Einheit in der Handlung erlangte der Dichter in dem Libretto, in dem er für Hoffmann die breite Erzählung zu einer festgeschlossenen Handlung zusammenzudrängen versuchte, dem Kühleborn einen weit bedeutenderen Platz einräumt und ihm Geisterscharen, die allerdings als Geisterchöre notwendig waren, unterordnete. In der Erzählung ist aber die Rolle von Kühleborn nur episodisch. Es wäre vielleicht interessant zu zeigen, wie Fouqué diesem völligen Mangel an Zusammenhang in der Ausführung abzuholzen versuchte, in dem er jedem Kapitel, wie es in den alten Volksmärchen üblich war, einen Titel zulegte. Diese Untersuchung aber würde nur die Schlüsse zu denen wir jetzt gelangt sind, bestätigen.

Fouqué ist bei der Benutzung seiner Quellen nicht folgerichtig verfahren: Die Handlung ist verworren, die Charaktere ohne feste Form; alles verrät hier die rasch entworfene, noch rascher geschriebene Novelle. Die Einheit, die wir in den Grundlagen vermissen, würden wir ebenfalls umsonst in den Ausführungen der phantastischen Motive suchen. Wir finden darin keinen Grundgedanke der sich über die ganze Erzählung erstreckt, keine Bestrebung, die Wasserelemente zu kennzeichnen und ihr Wesen zu deuten. Der Angabe, dass Undine das dritte Glied an einem die vier Elemente behandelnden Cyclus bildet, dass sie sich den beiden unausgeführt Schauspielen—der Goldfisch und der Salamander anreihet, dürfen wir nicht ohne weiteres Glauben schenken. Der Titel lautet Undine, und nicht die Undine, Fouqué hat später, als Undine zu klassischem Werk wurde, als seine Pflicht betrachtet, dem Glückskind Eltern zu suchen, und er hat sich auf Boehme berufen. Das Wunderhorn und Melusine konnten aber dagegen Einspruch erheben. Wir haben es hier nicht mit einer aus dem Dichtergeist entsprungenen Phantastik, sondern mit einer Sammlung volkstümlicher Motive zu tun. Die Besetzung der Rollen kennen wir längst, denn Fouqué führt, ohne Wahl, alle phantastischen Gestalten ins Feld: Schwäne, Kobolde, ein Bär, der eine Frauenstimme hat, Gespenster, Wald, Schwarzwald, Donau. Die Scenen haben wir in ihrem Ganzen oder im Einzelnen

schon erlebt. Diese Hand zum Beispiel, die aus der Donau herausgreift und das Halsband erfasst, ist wohl dieselbe Hand, die in den Volksmärchen einem fischfängenden Kind einen Ring entführt. Was uns an Kühleborn selbst interessiert, ist übrigens sein phantastisches Wesen nicht. Es ist seine Zudringlichkeit, sein beständiges Beharren, sich in Dinge hineinzumischen, die ihn gar nicht angehen. Die Unverschämtheit, die er Undine gegenüber zu Vorschein trägt. Er folgt ihr auf Schritt und Tritt. Dass er aber das schlafende, tiefe und schlaue Element des Wassers in sich verkörpert, das mutet man ihm gar nicht zu. Er ist ein dummer Bach, wie er einstmals ein dummer Strom war. Es fehlt in ihm an Seele, vielmehr aber an Verstand, und der einzige gute Einfall dieses Wasserelementes ist ein Fass Wein auf sein Ufer hervorzuholen. Die Schwäche und den episodischen Wert des Phantastischen bei Fouqué erkennt man übrigens an der Haltung, die die Menschen in seiner Erzählung den Geistern gegenüber annehmen. Während bei Hoffmann der Gedanke des Fürchterlichen fortwährend die Menschen umschwebt, während alles, in dieser schweren Luft, lauert, droht, grinst, macht sich Huldbrand nicht soviel daraus, verschmäht jede Vorsicht; betrachtet den Kühleborn nur wie eine "tolle Verwandschaft", und fürchtet sich mehr vor dem Regenguss als vor dem Gedanken, dass etwas hinter dem Regenguss stecken könnte. Der Degen, glaubt er, wird jedem Spuk das Handwerk legen. Es fehlt ihm dieses Mißtrauen gegen sich selbst: "Was eine Menschenbrust vermag, wenn sie so recht will, so recht aus ihrem besten Leben will, das versteht der ohnmächtige Gaukler nicht." Bei Hoffmann im Gegenteil fürchten sich vor den Gespenstern die Offiziere selbst. Die Träume, die bösen Ahnungen, die Himmelsboten lässt er an sich vorbei gehen. "Er denkt gewiss blutwenig an alle diese Dinge" sagt der Kühleborn selbst. Schließlich steckt diese Gleichgültigkeit den Leser an, trotz aller Schauerlichkeiten und Ungeheuerlichkeiten, mit denen die Waldreise oder die Schwarzwaldnacht ausgestattet sind, will uns kein Schauer überkommen. Die Einheit und der Reiz der Erzählung liegt vielleicht in einer Eigenschaft, die man sonst Fouqué vorzuwerfen pflegt, in ihrem romantischen Anstrich. "Undine, schreibt schon ein Zeitgenosse von Fouqué," halte ich in Ton, Farbengebung und Zeichnungen für unübertrefflich", und in der That verdankt Undine ihren Erfolg viel weniger den Helden, als den Dekorationen und den Costümen. Die anspruchsvolle Lokalfarbe des Zaubertrings die scharfe Charakterisierung der Urstoffsfahrten (?) hat sich hier zu einer einfärbigen und stimmungsvollen Färbung abgetönt. Während Fouqué sich sonst bemüht, eine bestimmte Periode mit ihrem ganzen Helden und Sittenkram abzuschildern, Karl den Grossen auf Albrecht, Pappenheim, und Anachronismus auf Anachronismus häuft, führt er uns hier in ein rein konventionelles und dadurch vielleicht echtes Mittelalter. Wann spielte Undine? "Es mögen wohl viel hundert Jahre her sein" sagt er und das genügt. In welcher Gegend? In einer Gegend in der eine Stadt sich gegen einen sonnenbeleuchteten Hintergrund auftürmt, in der es ein Schloss gibt mit einem tiefen Brunnen, in der es auch Damen gibt, die so wunderschön sind wie Bertalda, dass man gar nicht sieht, ob sie blond oder schwarz sind. In dieser Auffassung des Mittelalters und nicht in der Rolle des Wassers liegt der tiefe Sinn der Novelle. "Hinter den phantastischen Rittergestalten lauschte wohl, wie Fouqué sagte, eine Naturbeziehung auf Luft und Erde." Der Ritter mit scharlachrotem Mantel und veilchenblauem goldgestickten Wams verkörpert wirklich in sich mehr als alle historischen Bilder und Portraits Arnims die Sehnsucht der Romantik nach einem heiteren und rätselhaften Land. Mehrere Charakterzüge

verleihen dieser Epoche und diesem Land eine einheitliche Färbung. In diesem Mittelalter passen alle Bewohner zunächst zusammen, nur eine Gestalt sticht grell von den übrigen ab, der Mönch. Es sind nicht hier, wie bei Eichendorff, ungläubige Grafen oder ausstaffierte Dichter, die eines liederlichen Lebens müde sind, und sich mehr vor den Menschen als vor dem Teufel fürchten, ohne Klosterregeln, ohne Obern. Es sind einfache, alte, alleswissende Menschen, die mit Wort und That den armen Menschen zur Seite stehen. Ihre Gegenwart in diesem Mittelalter verbreitet eine gewisse allgemeine Ruhe.

Ist es aber nicht sündhaft, die christliche Religion in diese verzauberte Welt einzuführen, und den heiligen Vertreter Gottes den Gauklerien und Neckereien der Elementargeister preiszugeben. Ist es auch ganz kunstgemäß, den Ernst und den wahren Glauben eines Priesters neben die Erzeugnisse der Phantasie zu stellen? Es ist auffallend, wie Fouqué sich bemüht, seine Hochwürden vor jeder Begegnung mit den Geistern zu bewahren. Ebenso wie der Pater Coelestinus, in der Novelle das Opfer, ohne es zu wissen unter wunderlichen und wundertätigen Helden lebt, geht der Pater Heilmann durch unsere Erzählung, und alles, was ihn betrifft, spielt sich natürlicherweise ab. Wenn der Kühleborn unseren Fremden durch den Wald das Geleit gibt, und mit dem Mönch über die Einsiedler scherzt, legt der Geistliche alles sehr natürlich aus: "Das habe ich lange gedacht, weil der Bach so dicht auf der Anhöhe neben uns herließ. Anfangs wollt' er mir gar vorkommen als wäre er ein Mensch und könne sprechen." Er erfährt nie, dass die junge Frau eine Undine war. "Ich will gar nichts darüber sprechen, Welch eine wundersame Bewandnis es mit ihr gehabt haben mag, weiß auch darum nichts gewisses." So drückt er sich aus. Mehrere Charakterzüge verleihen diesem Mittelalter eine einheitliche Färbung. Alle die Bewohner des phantastischen Landes passen zunächst zusammen, und keine Gestalt sticht grell von den übrigen ab. Und die Natur ist für ihn kein Geheimnis, weil er nicht weiter neugierig ist.

Ein zweiter Charakterzug tritt ebenfalls in diesem Mittelalter immer wieder hervor: die Freundlichkeit. Zuerst die Freundlichkeit des Wetters. Undine ist dem Frühling gewidmet, und die Anhäufung der Überschwemmungen, die Wasserfälle, der Rasen und die Blumen verleiht der Erzählung eine stimmungsvolle Frische. Fouqué weilt mit Unruhe in den anderen Jahreszeiten und auf folgende Weise fertigt er die Monate des Regens und des Schnees ab: "In so erlabenden Verhältnissen war der Winter gekommen und vorüber gegangen, und der Frühling sah mit seinen hellgrünen Sprossen, und seinem lichtblauen Himmel zu den fröhlichen Menschen herein." Denn die Menschen sind auch fröhlich und freundlich. Ritter und Bauern verbrüderen sich rasch, fühlen keine Schranken zwischen ihren Ständen; jeder weiß, was er sich und den anderen schuldig ist: die alte Fischersfrau verweigert dem Ritter den Lehnstuhl, und der Ritter gönnt dem alten Fischer den ersten Platz in seinem Schloß. All die Charaktere, die sich heutzutage bei dem Elend des heutigen Lebens voneinander abgeschlossen haben und schroff gegenüberstehen, sind noch geschmeidig, unbestimmt, raschen Umschwungs fähig. Bertalda und Hulbrand sind, in ihrer Unschlüssigkeit und ihrem Leichtsinn, sehr liebliche Geschöpfe, abwechselnd der Stolz und die Demut selbst. Auf diese allgemeine Freundlichkeit kann man einen anderen allgemeinen Zug zurückführen, diese bewundernde Anhänglichkeit der Frau an ihrem Herrn, die sich nur durch eine grenzenlose Hingebung kundgibt, eine Liebe der der Glaube an die Güte und die Allmacht des Mannes zu Grunde liegt;—die gern leidet und wie Kätzchen freut sich Undine mißhandelt zu werden.

Die Beschreibung dieses Mittelalters ist aber in der Undine in einem Punkt verfehlt. Fouqué hat mit oder ohne Absicht die Frage übersehen, ob aus diesen Gefühlen und diesen Sitten eine besondere Moral sich entwickelt, das heißt, ob diese Ritter die anders als wir handelten, sich andere Lebensregeln ausgesucht haben. Obwohl aber Undine ins Jahr 1811 fällt, in eine Periode wo Fouqué mit J. Stilling in eifrigstem Briefwechsel stand, macht sich darin kein Versuch kund, aus dem Verkehr der Ritter mit der freundlichen Natur, eine weittragende Anschauung hervorzuheben. Für das besondere Problem der Undine bleibt auch jede Lösung aus. Weder die Menschen, noch die Wassergeister, können sich daraus etwas zu nutze machen. Fouqué stellt die Frage nicht, ob der alte Wasserfürst recht hatte, seiner Tochter eine Seele zu verschaffen. Wo liegt die Wahrheit? was ist verbotene, was ist erlaubte Liebe? Hier kommt wieder die Verwirrung zu Vorschein, keine durchdachte Überzeugung tritt zu Tage. Und die Leser Fouqués haben sich darüber beklagt. Die aufgeklärten Geister schreiben mit Rahel: "Drei verschiedene Elemente sind darin, die sich nicht ergänzen und den Eindruck hindern. Sie heißen Liebe, Sittlichkeit und Spekulation über die Möglichkeiten des menschlichen Seins, bis zu den Grenzen anderer Wesen." Die streng christlichen Leser dagegen nehmen an der Unsittlichkeit der Erzählung Anstoß. Radowitz sagt: "In der Fouqueschen Undine ist der Grundgedanke ganz vergriffen. Nach der alten und tiefen Auffassung ist die Natur in ihrem von Gott abgewendeten und blinden Wesen das Dämonische, welches den Menschen verlockt und an sich reißt. Fouqué hat die Sache umgekehrt. Die arme christliche Hausfrau erscheint als Hemmung, als dürtiger Abweg, während das Heil und Wohl des Ritters an seine Nixe angeknüpft ist, so dass die erlöste und unsterbliche Seele einem Springbrunnen nachsteht." Im Grunde genommen hat er Recht, und wenn wir dem inneren Sinn der Novelle noch näher treten wollen, kommen wir zu dem Schluss: "Der Mensch ist verdorben und boshaft." Statthen Sie mit einer Seele, einen Elementargeist aus, und mit diesem neuen Instrument, mit dessen Handhabung er nicht einmal betraut ist, übertrifft er alle Gottesgeschöpfe. Schenken sie der Undine eine Seele und sie wird die demütigste, zärtlichste Frau. Schenke dem Kühleborn eine Seele und er wird ohne Zögern ein vollkommenes Wesen. Unwiderstehlich drängt sich in die Erzählung der Pessimismus ein. Jeder Spruch, den Fouqué nach dem Beispiel der alten Minnesänger, in seinen Stoff verwebt, beschuldigt uns Menschen einer neuen Schwäche. Bertalda liest den Brief des Vaters und verhöhnt ihn: "so, wie wir Menschen, fügt Fouqué hinzu, in ähnlichen Fällen es immer zu machen pflegen." Der Ritter findet schöne Ausreden für seine Untreue und Fouqué sagt: "Sich entschuldigend, wie wir es überhaupt lieben." Alles das und der Tod Undinens ist ungeschickt, und Fouqué kann nur zu seiner Verteidigung sagen, dass eben die Ungeschicklichkeit uns wieder ins Mittelalter versetzt, in dem es keine andere Moral gab, als die Heilige Schrift; das heißt, der unwiderrufliche Beweis unserer Verdorbenheit.

Die Ergebnisse, zu denen uns die Untersuchung führte, glaube ich deutlich genug im Laufe meines Vortrages hervorgehoben zu haben, und ich möchte nicht durch eine Zusammenfassung oder allgemeine Betrachtungen schließen. Ich möchte nur auf einen Charakterzug der Fouquéschen Technik aufmerksam machen, der trotz aller Verwirrung des Stoffes und ausser der äußerlichen Einheit der Dekoration, eine innere Einheit in all seine Romane einführt: Diesen Charakterzug kann man auf folgende Weise erklären: Man kostet bei Fouqué nur die klaren, deutlichen, aufrechten Gefühle—Schmerz oder Freude, Hass oder Liebe—er erspart uns alle unbestimmten Empfindungen, die Bangigkeit, die Unbehaglichkeit und

diese Wirkung kommt daher, dass sich alle Einzelheiten ohne Widerspruch dem Hauptthema fügen: Zum Beispiel, einem Leser, der in seinem Lehnstuhl sitzt und dabei Bier trinkt, wird ein Fehlschritt des Ritters vor seiner Braut eine physisch viel größere Unbehaglichkeit, als der Tod desselben auf dem Schlachtfelde bereiten. Die Leserin wird durch den Tod der Helden erschüttert, sie findet aber einen Trost in der Tatsache, dass ein wunderbarer Samtteppich ausfindig gemacht wird, um die Gestorbene in ihrem Sarg weicher ruhen zu lassen; Auch bei dem fürchterlichsten Abenteuer bringt uns der sorgsame Fouqué solche weiche Kissen mit: Eine Überschwemmung: was verschlägtst, sie bringt uns ein Fass Wein, ein Regenguss durchnässt die Reisenden, die Sonne geht sofort auf und macht sie trocken; der Herzog zieht die Hand von Bertalda ab, nicht aber ohne ihr vorher eine reiche Aussteuer zu schenken. Der Ritter stirbt, er sinkt aber nicht auf die Erde, sondern auf ein weiches Ruhebett. Nichts ruft uns die Unannehmlichkeiten des alltäglichen Lebens in Erinnerung, und diese Technik bildet dennoch den reinen Gegensatz zu der Technik Hoffmanns: sie lässt keinen kurzsichtigen Ritter zu, der die Hüte verwechselt, oder das Tischtuch mit den Sporen fortreißt. Überall herrscht Angemessenheit und Ordnung. Wenn nur drei Ritter zusammen sind, wird es zu einer Parade. Die Details sind auch gemeine Soldaten und dürfen nicht den Eindruck des ganzen stören. Daher kommt, dass uns der Tod in den Romanen Fouqués gar nicht so entsetzlich vorkommt, und daher auch, dass die Lektüre dieser Schlachten, Morden und Hinterhaltenromanen [sic] eine Erholungslektüre ist.

Our first interest in this essay is the light it sheds upon Giraudoux's critical technique. Written in hesitant and faulty German, it appears at first to be just a forthright *devoir*. The problem is stated, the material examined methodically for evidence, the case built up and the conclusions reached logically. Numerous citations from critics and allusions to other versions of the Undine legend lend an impression of weight and worth. There seems little to announce the brilliant nonchalant critic of Racine and La Fontaine, whose delight in paradox and dialectical gymnastics leads him far from orthodox opinion. Yet rereading the Fouqué story suffices to indicate our error. Where we saw an impartial analyst cutting through the mass of confusing impressions which Fouqué created, we now see an intensely subjective critic apparently bent upon maneuvering the German author into an unfavorable position. The validity of Giraudoux's arguments and his line of reasoning are actually highly suspicious.

One may question Giraudoux's initial assumption. Is there any reason why Fouqué could not make of the legend what he pleased? As a matter of fact, Fouqué apparently chose to make the first theme (that of an elemental spirit in quest of a soul) the principal motivation of his story, without however excluding the second (that of a conflict between good and bad), which develops logically, if incidentally, out of the first.

Has Fouqué slighted the matter of the soul? It is referred to directly throughout the narrative, is the key to the character of Undine and the motive of the action. If Undine is not equipped with fins or sea-green eyes, she is unmistakably a child of nature, devoid of qualities which having a soul might confer. The alteration which a soul brings to her is clearly indi-

cated, even insisted upon. From a spontaneous, conscienceless creature, she becomes humble, devoted, self-sacrificing. She has not become the typical *Mädchen* whom Giraudoux would see. She is too perfect to be human—compare her with Berthalda who is a real woman—but remains consistently an undine which has acquired a soul.

Fouqué's handling of the gradual estrangement between Undine and Huldbrand is certainly a clumsy and sentimental device, but we cannot in fairness accuse Fouqué of forgetting that the reason for their trouble is Undine's peculiar status: ". . . die arme Ehefrau als ein fremdartiges Wesen . . . zu fürchten." The two minor objections which Giraudoux raises seem without foundation. Undine's angelic behavior explains amply how she uses the gift of a soul, and since Fouqué's story purports to portray the Christian Middle Ages, there can be no question as to whether her father was right in wanting a soul for his daughter. It goes without saying that a soul would be the most cherished possession of man and an object of envy for all elemental spirits. There seems no justification whatever to find the subject of the soul either external or effaced.

In narrating the sufferings the water spirit must undergo on account of her soul, Fouqué arrives at the conflict between Undine and Berthalda. It grows naturally out of the situation, but never attains proportions great enough to confuse the real theme or imply the symbolic struggle of good versus evil which Giraudoux arbitrarily assumes to be Fouqué's purpose. Undine is flawless whereas Berthalda does possess some unlovely traits of character. Even if Fouqué does not raise the conflict to a play of abstract forces, Giraudoux could not have been seriously worried as to where the blame should fall. He could not fail to see the hypocrisy of Berthalda's speech about being just a poor fisherman's daughter. Fouqué has made it quite plain that her chief fault is pride.

There is no evidence in the *Märchen* that Kühleborn is introduced for allegorical purposes. He is at worst a naughty sprite scaring and annoying people, but not doing any real harm. Most of his mischief is based on his indignation at the way his niece Undine is being treated by humankind. It is not because he is an episodic character that he fails to represent evil. He simply is not bad enough.

Does it follow that because Fouqué's fantastic elements are of folk origin they are therefore weak and external? Yes, Giraudoux replies, because the pranks of the spooks are so well known that even the characters themselves do not take them seriously! This we must question. We fail to find any trace of irony in Fouqué's approach to the medieval mind. He has painted the typical *Märchen* world of which the fantastic is an integral part, a naïve and superstitious world in which spooks are as real and familiar as anything seen in the broad light of day. Giraudoux has mistaken the knight's courage for indifference. Huldbrand shudders at any mention of the super-

natural,<sup>8</sup> and if his tussles with waterfalls strike us as being funny, it is not because of his sophistication but our own.

After lingering long over these minor questions, Giraudoux finally arrives at the really significant and unifying element of the novel. To call it something so superficial or trivial-sounding as romantic atmosphere (*Dekoration und Costume*) is either a sly trick of dialectics or evidence of failure to see the elements of the story in their proper proportions. For this romantic atmosphere is no superficial coloring, but the sum and substance of Fouqué's work. *Undine* is not important for character or plot. It is a sentimental and nostalgic picture of the pious and superstitious Middle Ages, in which man had only his Christian faith to sustain him against a host of terrifying unseen forces. In such a world Undine's character seems plausible, her career of suffering consistent and meaningful. In such a world Kühleborn and Father Heilmann function properly in the rôles assigned them.

Young Giraudoux appears to have set up arbitrary criteria and proceeded to indict the "fromme" Fouqué for sins which he surely never committed. His inexperience and language handicap make particularly evident in this essay the basic flaw in his criticism. His imagination was never deterred by sober regard for facts, and struck by an idea, he could create from it an elaborate verbal edifice without reference to blueprints. But if Giraudoux's critical viewpoint is generally questionable, it is always stimulating. His remarks on Racine or Gérard de Nerval or—Fouqué's *Undine*—arrest the attention and invite fruitful reflection.

Turning to look at Giraudoux's own *Undine* in the light of his comments upon Fouqué's, we observe that Giraudoux permitted himself every one of the faults he found in his predecessor. If Fouqué was obliged to follow one of the two traditional themes to attain unity of character and action, Giraudoux felt for himself no such constraint. Ondine's native habitat was certainly never the sea, and her career on land has little to do with her soul. What actually is the mainspring of the action in the German *Märchen* barely receives passing reference. Ondine's marriage to Hans has not changed her status in any way, as she points out in her conversation with Iseut. With Iseut's pretty reply the matter is closed:

La question [de la soul] ne se pose pas pour toi, ni pour aucune créature non humaine. L'âme du monde aspire et expire par les naseaux et les branchies. Mais l'homme a voulu son âme à soi. Il a morcelé stupidement l'âme générale. . . . Il n'y a qu'une série de petits lots d'âme où poussent de maigres fleurs et de maigres légumes . . .<sup>9</sup>

Ondine's peculiar defect troubles Hans far less than Huldrbrand. As the reason for his gradual estrangement from Ondine, we have only a mention at the very end of the play; Hans says to Bertha that only one thing is lacking on this day of their marriage: "De m'être vengé, de l'avoir forcée,

8. See chapters 9, 10, 18.

9. P. 143.

devant la ville réunie, à confesser son état et son crime."<sup>10</sup> But the speech reveals more the violence of a man still in love and feeling guilty than righteous indignation that he has been trapped into a marriage with a monster. The transition which Fouqué managed so badly, Giraudoux effects by the daring device of the illusionist in the second act. But while it shows the attraction Bertha still holds for Hans, it does not convince us that Ondine is half fish. Giraudoux charged that Fouqué's Undine is merely a *Mädchen*. Yet if we are to believe Giraudoux's own words, his water nymph is "la femme la plus humaine qu'il y ait eu."<sup>11</sup> Of course, actually she is neither nymph nor woman, and Giraudoux has made no attempt to follow the first theme. As for the second, the conflict between good and bad, between lawful and unlawful love, it is no more developed than with Fouqué.

What has happened in the play to the fantastic element which Giraudoux chides Fouqué for not sustaining? It, along with its counterpart in the *Märchen*, the homely element, is systematically burlesqued. The naïve *Weltanschauung* of Fouqué's story is totally destroyed by irony and all sorts of *blague*. To a sophisticated twentieth-century humorist, the world of goblins and familiar demons offers rich possibilities for comedy. In this connection, note the conversation between Hans and the judge:

Hans: . . . Je réclame le droit pour les hommes d'être un peu seuls sur cette terre. Ce n'est pourtant pas grand ce que Dieu leur a accordé, cette surface avec deux mètres de haut, entre ciel et enfer. . . . Ce que je demande, c'est vivre sans sentir grouiller autour de nous, comme elles s'y acharnent, ces vies extra-humaines, ces harengs à corps de femme, ces vessies à tête d'enfant, ces lézards à lunettes et à cuisses de nymphe. . . .

Le second juge: Evidemment. Cela peut nous paraître déconcertant qu'ils éprouvent leur plus grande joie à nous voir prendre nos bains de pieds, embrasser nos femmes ou nos bonnes, fesser nos enfants. Mais le fait est indéniable: autour de chaque geste humain, le plus bas, le plus noble, affublés à la hâte de carcasses ou de peaux en velours, le nez en grouin ou le derrière en dard de guêpe, comme si manger ou rendre un miracle, ils s'amassent et forment leur ronde. . . .<sup>12</sup>

The ponderous bourgeois virtue and piety which the Germans were wont to introduce into their fairy tales is fair game for Giraudoux. Fouqué had made of the fisherman's hut a very solid house, dedicated to the homely qualities of cleanliness, godliness, hospitality. We witness in it the very realistic preparations as the nuptial chamber is made ready for the knight and the nymph. Next morning the company greets Undine with lusty jokes which cause her to blush in her modesty as she busies herself with the household chores. In the midst of such *Gemülligkeit* one forgets that right behind the hut lies an enchanted forest! All this must have seemed very heavy-handed to Giraudoux, who would make the walls of the hut transparent and create a horde of fanciful enticing creatures to hover about it. The incongruities which he found in the *Märchen* he turns into sophisticated

10. P. 170.

11. P. 194.

12. Pp. 181-182.

comedy. Thus he would have Ondine consenting to do the family ironing only on craggy peaks and recite her prayers only with her head under water! No one better than this Frenchman is qualified to purify the old story of all realism and lift it into an airy sphere of poetic fancy. Never once does Giraudoux drop into reality; never once does he allow the illusion of the miraculous to persist.

The romantic atmosphere to which Giraudoux ascribes the unity of Fouqué's work cannot survive Giraudoux's jests about knights-errant and heraldry. The medieval trial in the last act turns into a discussion of pastry. Anachronisms abound. When Ondine learns the queen's name is Iseut, she innocently inquires after Tristan! The material of the legend is methodically exploited for humor. Needless to say, the Christian motif disappears in the general hilarity.

Giraudoux's play develops, however, into something more than a delightful parody of the old *Ritterstück*. Throughout all the clowning there persists one note on a level of high seriousness. That is Ondine's love for Hans. The lyric theme grows stronger as the action progresses, and although Giraudoux's wit constantly wards off all impression of sentimentality, the play closes as a beautiful love poem.

Ondine is nothing more nor less than a symbol of ideal love. There is no more question of a water nymph marrying a man to obtain a soul. Why does Ondine marry Hans? She saw him and fell in love: "Hans est le premier homme que j'ai vu, on ne peut choisir davantage."<sup>13</sup> There is no more question of good love or bad love or rivalry with the character Bertha. The purity and intensity of Ondine's love permits no comparison or qualification:

Hans: Quelle est ta seule pensée, Ondine?

Ondine: Toi.

Hans: Quel est ton pain? Quel est ton vin? Quand tu présidais ma table, et que tu levais ta coupe, que buvais-tu?

Ondine: Toi.

Hans: Quel est ton dieu?

Ondine: Toi.

Hans: Vous l'entendez, juges! Elle pousse l'amour au blasphème.<sup>14</sup>

The passages in which she expresses her love strike exquisite lyric accents in the midst of the general spoofing. The words she uses to tell of her loyalty and devotion have a Biblical quality: her hope is to be "tout ce qu'aime mon seigneur Hans, tout ce qu'il est. D'être ce qu'il a de plus beau et ce qu'il a de plus humble.... Je serai le pommeau de ta selle. Je serai ce que tu pleures, ce que tu rêves. . . ."<sup>15</sup> Giraudoux has taken Ondine out of the sea and out of the kitchen to represent love as perfect as man can imagine it.

13. P. 142.

14. P. 197.

15. Pp. 45-46.

She is no elemental spirit, but a glimpse of a better and purer world. In Hans' words:

Il était un chevalier qui cherchait dans ce monde ce qui n'est pas usé, quotidien, éculé. Il trouva au bord d'un lac une fille appelée Ondine. Elle faisait d'or les assiettes d'étain. Elle sortait dans l'orage sans être mouillée. Non seulement elle était la plus belle fille qu'il ait vue au monde, mais il sentait qu'elle était la gaieté, la tendresse, le sacrifice.<sup>16</sup>

But if man ever dreams of such love which turns life into paradise, he cannot accept it. Hans, an ordinary moral, an ordinary male, cannot accept such a gift. He must deceive his wife with Bertha, whose character is just as grossly human as his own. Just as Ondine represents perfection, the other characters represent the weakness of the flesh. Man's distinguishing characteristic is faithlessness. He is contrasted with Ondine's fanciful examples of deceitless creatures, the dogfish, the undines, etc. They had only to look at Hans to understand infidelity:

Ils l'ont su tout d'un coup. En le voyant. Jamais il n'avait été question chez eux de tromperie. Jamais avant la venue de Hans. Mais ils ont aperçu un bel homme à cheval, la loyauté sur son visage, la sincérité dans la bouche, et alors le mot tromper a couru jusqu'au fond des ondes...<sup>17</sup>

Hans has shown by his infidelity that he cannot rise above his mortal station. Therefore he must die. The love tirades which close the piece constitute a remarkably poignant love duet.

From Fouqué to Giraudoux the Undine legend has been transformed from a glorification of the soul into a glorification of love. In pursuing his theme, Fouqué harmonized the elements of the story into a nostalgic evocation of the Christian Middle Ages, so dear to the hearts of the German romantics. Giraudoux, a modern sophisticate who dreads sentimentality above all else, frames and protects his tender theme by a systematic burlesque of the world Fouqué created. If the youthful essay seems a fumbling critique of Fouqué, in the some thirty years which passed after its composition Giraudoux had learned how to forge more effective weapons. Yet Giraudoux is even a greater poet than he is a humorist, and the play he created merely as a "commentary on Fouqué's *Undine*" deserves a high place among the love dramas of our age.

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16. P. 54.

17. P. 139.

## REVIEW ARTICLE

### UNE PRISE DE CONSCIENCE: LE PANORAMA DE M. GAËTAN PICON<sup>1</sup>

By Jean Hytier

M. GAËTAN PICON est en passe de devenir le meilleur critique littéraire de sa génération. La perspicacité, le courage et l'ardeur contenue de ses articles l'ont, depuis quelques années, signalé à l'attention du public. Sa chronique de la revue *Fontaine*, son remarquable *André Malraux* (1945), son *Georges Bernanos* (1948), plus cursif mais aussi pénétrant, faisaient désirer précisément le livre qu'il vient de nous donner.

Le *Panorama de la nouvelle littérature française* est divisé en trois parties: une "Introduction" (250 pages), qui est la partie essentielle, des "Illustrations," c'est-à-dire une anthologie (180 pages) et des "Documents" (60 pages). Voici le sommaire de l'"Introduction," auquel nous ajoutons entre crochets les noms des principaux auteurs traités:

Avertissement.—I L'héritage. 1 Les derniers classiques [Valéry, Gide, Claudel]. 2 La tradition romanesque. 3 Une littérature poétique. 4 L'aventure surréaliste.—II La génération de 1930. 1 Perspectives et valeurs nouvelles. 2 Une génération éthique [Bernanos, Malraux, Aragon, Montherlant, Giono, Saint-Exupéry]. 3 Lucidité et rêverie [Jouhandeau, Green].—III Le nouveau roman français. 1 Un naturalisme métaphysique [Sartre, Camus, Queneau]. 2 Une littérature de transfiguration [Genet, Devaulx, Gracq]. 3 Evénement et tradition.—IV Situation de la poésie. 1 Les tendances générales. 2 Accomplissements poétiques [Reverdy, Superville, Jouve, Perse, Aragon, Eluard, Breton]. 3 La nouvelle poésie, a) la rhétorique symbolique, b) la rhétorique pure, c) les réalistes, d) les lyriques et quelques autres. 4 Quatre poètes majeurs [Michaux, Prévert, Ponge, Char].—V Problèmes contemporains: les essayistes. 1 Les systèmes philosophiques. 2 Les problèmes de l'essai. 3 Trois opposants [Benda, Cailliois, Maulnier]. 4 Un enquêteur: Jean Paulhan. 5 De la sociologie à la mystique [Monnerot, Bataille]. 6 La critique, le journal et la revue.—VI Regards sur le théâtre.—En guise de conclusion: D'une métamorphose de la littérature.

L'"Index" des noms cités dans cette "Introduction" concerne environ 265 écrivains contemporains, mais c'est à une centaine seulement d'entre eux (93 exactement) que renvoient des chiffres en caractères gras. Si on examine la disposition de l'"Introduction," on constate que 30 auteurs ont l'honneur d'un sous-titre, constitué par leur nom en gros caractères; il faut y ajouter Paulhan, qui est le seul à figurer dans un titre de sous-chapitre; une trentaine d'autres auteurs sont l'objet d'une étude plus ou moins étendue. M. Picon use, de plus, d'un moyen typographique de discrimination; quand il introduit un nom nouveau, il le met en capitales minces ou il le laisse en caractères ordinaires. Les favorisés de la capitale

1. *Panorama de la Nouvelle littérature française*. Par Gaëtan Picon. Paris: les Editions du Point du Jour, N.R.F., 1949. Pp. 524.

mince ne coïncident pas toujours avec les bénéficiaires du chiffre gras à l'*Index*: 80 auteurs environ cumulent ces distinctions, 65 ont la première sans avoir la seconde, pour une dizaine c'est l'inverse, et une centaine n'ont ni l'une ni l'autre. Voilà un beau jeu de conjectures ouvert. M. Picon a voulu, je crois, tantôt marquer des différences d'importance, tantôt signaler le cachet d'actualité, la participation aux tendances profondes de l'époque. Ce n'est pas le seul signe de sa dualité d'intention que nous rencontrerons. La seconde partie, l'anthologie, donne 78 textes de 24 auteurs (ceux dont les noms courrent perpétuellement sur la couverture du livre) avec une bibliographie de leurs œuvres. La troisième partie, "Documents," offre 36 textes, de 34 auteurs (dont un anonyme). Il n'y a que des compliments à faire à M. Picon pour ces deux séries de textes, qui donnent une vue excellente de l'aile marchante de notre littérature.

Pour répondre à la curiosité du lecteur qui s'adresse à la "littérature en train de se faire," M. Picon part de la "littérature de ces dernières années," sans remonter à une date précise qui serait arbitraire: ce qui unit les auteurs dont il parle, c'est "leur participation à un certain moment de la littérature, celui que nous sommes en train de vivre." Ils sont les représentants "d'une nouvelle littérature française distribuée autour de forces et de tendances irréductibles à celles qui dominaient les années 1920 ou l'année 1930." Cette "optique précise," nous avertit M. Picon, "n'est pas celle de l'histoire." C'est pourquoi il ne parle pas d'un grand nombre d'écrivains contemporains, même célèbres, dont il ne conteste pas la valeur, ni même parfois la supériorité sur ceux dont il entretient ses lecteurs, mais qui appartiennent à un autre "climat," sans rapport avec le nôtre. Cette première partie de l'"Avertissement" de M. Picon est fort nette.

La seconde l'est un peu moins. Expliquant la composition de son livre, M. Picon nous dit que, "dans l'introduction comme dans le choix de textes," il a été dominé par le souci "de marquer les distances, . . . de distinguer aussi nettement que possible les degrés de la grandeur et du mérite. . . . L'art est d'abord un *langage de formes*, et c'est ce langage que nous avons, plus que tout autre, écouté." M. Picon entend faire de la critique esthétique. Seulement, au milieu de ces déclarations, il en a glissé d'autres d'une toute autre nature: "nous nous sommes efforcé de dégager les tendances générales, ajoutant le point de vue de l'histoire à celui de l'anthologie. Cependant, le point de vue qui domine est ce dernier. . . . Constamment nous avons jugé et parié. Si la postérité n'est pas exacte au rendez-vous que nous lui donnons, au moins ce livre témoignera-t-il de préférences qui, cela va sans dire, ne sont pas seulement celles de l'auteur."

Il y a quelque embarras dans ce programme. "Dégager les tendances générales," c'est faire de l'histoire, contrairement à l'intention proclamée du début de l'"Avertissement," et comme le reconnaît M. Picon lui-même. "Juger et parier," c'est faire de la critique esthétique et même prophétique, fondée sur le postulat très légitime que la valeur de l'œuvre est la garantie de sa survie; mais 1°, cette confiance en la postérité est contraire à l'état

d'esprit nouveau auquel M. Picon rattache les auteurs qu'il a retenus (voir notamment le texte de Sartre qui ouvre le premier numéro des *Temps Modernes* et que M. Picon reproduit [pages 468-469]: "la gloire posthume se fonde toujours sur un malentendu.... Nous ne souhaitons pas gagner notre procès en appel...."); 2°, M. Picon est-il sûr que les écrivains les plus représentatifs de la littérature d'actualité soient, par cela même, garantis esthétiquement dans leur durée, comme les principes de son appréciation le feraient croire mais comme les raisons d'actualité de son choix en peuvent faire douter? En 1831, c'est peut-être le Petrus Borel des *Rhapsodies* et le Jules Janin de la *Femme morte et l'âne guillotiné* que M. Picon aurait mis en valeur, et le Balzac de la *Peau de Chagrin* plutôt que celui des premières *Scènes de la vie privée*. Il nous assure que, quelques années avant 1670, un livre correspondant au sien eût dû mettre l'accent sur la préciosité, et c'est dire que l'actualité eût guidé ce choix, mais, sans disputer sur la date qu'il suggère, que seraient devenus alors le critérium esthétique, le pari et le rendez-vous avec la postérité?

Ces objections théoriques n'altèrent pas gravement le programme de M. Picon. Son double dessein se développe, en effet, avec une fermeté remarquable. Au fur et à mesure qu'on avance dans son livre, on saisit de mieux en mieux les raisons de son choix, d'autant qu'il prend soin, à propos des principaux auteurs qu'il considère, de préciser leur rôle dans le mouvement, d'en noter les forces de progrès ou de retenu dans les voies de la tradition, de les avertir des menaces internes qui risquent de ruiner la qualité ou de divertir la portée de leur œuvre. Faute de pouvoir suivre pas à pas M. Picon, nous ferons quelques coupes en travers de sa pensée.

Toute critique de son livre devrait, à notre avis, porter d'abord sur le choix et l'exclusion des auteurs en fonction des principes qui ont guidé cette sélection. Il est facile de concilier l'ambiguïté de son avertissement en disant que M. Picon a choisi en raison de la valeur formelle au sein des œuvres témoignant d'un esprit nouveau. Il n'y a donc pas à lui reprocher d'avoir écarté des œuvres de qualité qui ne manifestent pas cet esprit nouveau, généralement œuvres de continuateurs, qui ne sont pas nécessairement des traditionalistes ou néo-classicisants, mais peuvent simplement appartenir à une lignée moderniste moins récente. Simplement, M. Picon estime que ces œuvres sont dépassées. Il les voit "derrière nous." Le seul point à soullever concernerait les œuvres qui seraient en avance sur le temps présent, pour qui l'existentialisme serait déjà périmé, et dont, faute d'une perspicacité suffisante et d'un climat favorable, nous serions impuissants à discerner l'originalité (un peu comme il nous montre Reverdy ou Char devant attendre leur public); sur ces précurseurs méconnus, on ne saurait en vouloir à M. Picon de ne pas être plus lucide que nous. Il n'y a pas à lui reprocher non plus d'avoir éliminé de son panorama une foule d'œuvres de second ou de troisième ordre qui formeront plus tard pour les historiens la toile de fond de ce mouvement nouveau des esprits (comme les petits ou moyens dramaturges qui on précédé ou accompagné l'élosion du théâtre

de Corneille). Le critère esthétique a servi ici à cribler la production climatérique. Il est même probable que M. Picon nous a plutôt fait bonne mesure et s'est montré indulgent: que restera-t-il, par exemple, de toute cette curieuse littérature de l'aveu qu'il rattache à l'existentialisme? En bonne justice, si l'on veut contester le choix de M. Picon, il faut se borner aux grands noms, à ceux qu'il a mis volontairement en relief. Mais ce qu'il faut d'abord savoir pour juger de son entreprise, c'est comment il entend les deux principes dont il se sert, et qu'il ajuste l'un à l'autre, le principe d'actualité et le principe esthétique.

Cette littérature nouvelle, à quoi la reconnaît-il? Dans son "Avertissement," il considère qu'on ne peut lui donner une date d'origine (1938 ou 1930), mais "par contre, nous savons très bien ce qu'elle signifie." Et, en effet, les indications qu'on peut glaner par la suite nous éclairent suffisamment. Le visage du monde moderne est celui de la catastrophe. M. Picon le dit et le redit. Il en résulte une littérature bien particulière et dont on a chance de saisir les traits essentiels si on examine les points de rupture avec la littérature d'hier ou d'avant-hier. C'est ce que M. Picon fait admirablement à propos de ceux qu'il appelle les derniers classiques et des principaux genres littéraires qu'il examine: le roman, la poésie, l'essai, le théâtre. D'une façon générale, "il n'est guère d'œuvre actuelle . . . où l'homme ne soit d'abord face à face avec le vide: le trouble existentiel—l'angoisse devant une existence privée de raison d'être—nous définit profondément." Alors que les œuvres romanesques du type traditionnel (celles de Duhamel, Mauriac, Romains, Martin du Gard, Colette, Carco, Maurois) "se referment sur elles-mêmes, se limitent à leur propre récit," sont, au fond, "un spectacle" visant à "donner l'illusion de la réalité," le roman nouveau est "un roman-conception," dont les héros "ne sont pas des caractères mais des attitudes" (éthiques ou métaphysiques); il est "l'expression d'une vérité intérieure," il manifeste "l'engagement total de l'homme en lui-même et sa participation totale à l'Histoire"; c'est "le roman de la liberté," "de la condition humaine," fruit "d'une conscience désemparée, délaissée—and d'un univers absurde, muet, accablant," mais d'une conscience qui a "choisi d'aller jusqu'au bout de ce désarroi," sans "tricher," décidée à la "lucidité à tout prix," qui s'exprime simplement sur "le ton du procès-verbal," et qui fait succéder "à une objectivité fondée sur la distance et l'indifférence . . . une objectivité faite d'intimité et de participation." La poésie a commencé plus tôt à rompre avec le passé. Avec Apollinaire et quelques autres, elle a revêtu une allure nouvelle, libéré l'image et le mot, intégré le matériel du monde moderne, envahi la prose (Giraudoux, Cocteau); cependant cette poésie nous paraît étrangère aujourd'hui par son "climat de fantaisie, de vacances sans arrière-pensée." Le surréalisme, lui, est resté dans une large mesure notre poésie par sa "confusion ardente avec la vie," son "ambition d'être plus que littérature," son "terrorisme" (comme dit Paulhan) qui traite le langage en suspect, son "attitude accusatrice vis-à-vis du monde et de l'existence même."

Bref, l'existentialisme prolonge le surréalisme. Mais "la révolte surréaliste n'est pas l'angoisse existentielle. . . Pour le surréalisme, la liberté . . . est ce que nous avons. . . Pour l'existentialisme, elle est ce qui nous reste. . ." D'autre part, "le surréalisme est un enthousiasme . . .," tandis que "nous reconnaissions dans l'existentialisme l'expression naturelle d'une génération qui a vu trop d'échecs et de ruines pour croire à autre chose qu'à une lucidité sans illusions. Le courant central de notre littérature est un pessimisme qui lutte contre lui-même, cherche une issue. . ." Les mêmes thèmes reviennent dans les monographies de romanciers ou de poètes, et nous pourrions nous arrêter là, mais il faut signaler l'allure qu'ils prennent dans le chapitre important que M. Picon a consacré à *l'essai* et dans le chapitre exigu qu'il a accordé au théâtre.

*L'essai* est, pour M. Picon, une forme capitale de la littérature nouvelle, à condition qu'il soit en rapport plus ou moins direct avec les préoccupations de celle-ci et qu'il soit lui-même une œuvre de conviction totale: "un essai n'a de valeur à nos yeux que si une passion singulière le gouverne et le marque." M. Picon se défend de présenter un tableau de la philosophie contemporaine; il ne retient que celle dont le ton, éloigné de l'objectivité habituelle, marque la position qu'on devine: "en un sens, l'on peut dire qu'aujourd'hui il n'est de philosophie valable qu'existentielle. . ." Le chapitre sur le théâtre, un peu sacrifié, est le plus sévère de tous. D'abord, M. Picon note la supériorité avérée du théâtre d'écrivains sur le théâtre-théâtre, ce qui pour lui n'est pas un bon signe. La décadence du théâtre lui semble due à l'inexistence et, peut-être, à l'impossibilité d'un mythe moderne,—ce que confirment les tentatives de retour aux grandes œuvres mythiques de l'antiquité. Comme substitut, on ne dispose guère que du "mythe de la révolte" ou "mythe de l'individu," qui "ne nourrit pas l'imagination et ne l'exalte pas aussi fortement que les images passées" parce qu'il est "le seul qui, par sa nature même, échoue à se traduire en sujets communs, en légendes collectives." Toutes les mythologies du passé ont été discrédiées par le cinéma, qui nous a donné le goût du présent, a usurpé le pouvoir immédiat sur le public, mais n'a réussi à donner la dimension du mythe qu'à l'acteur, non au sujet ou au personnage. Ce chapitre, presque négatif, confirme indirectement, par l'inactualité du théâtre et son impuissance à s'engager fortement dans l'époque, les vues de M. Picon sur les exigences de sa critique. Cette remarquable prise de conscience suffit à nous assurer que son évaluation est bien axée sur son objet. M. Picon est le critique d'une littérature née d'un monde tragique qu'elle regarde en face.

Le second principe n'est pas formulé expressément par M. Picon, mais ce qu'il dit de la valeur de l'œuvre, qui repose essentiellement sur la qualité formelle, le "rendez-vous donné à la postérité," tout cela implique un jugement d'ordre esthétique. Mais M. Picon ne s'en tient pas là. Si on est attentif aux considérants de ses jugements, on constate que ses motifs d'appréciation ressortissent aussi souvent à la morale qu'à l'esthétique.

On ne saurait s'en étonner: la littérature n'a pas le privilège de la pureté relative de la musique, ou même de la peinture. . . . Elle est art, mais rarement de façon exclusive et souvent de façon secondaire, encore plus en prose qu'en poésie. Quand le message subordonne, néglige ou même récuse l'instrument ou le genre littéraire qu'il emprunte, il est bien difficile, et il serait même injuste, de maintenir la critique sur le plan artistique. Or tel est le cas avec une très grande partie de la littérature étudiée par M. Picon: l'intention y déborde la forme, quand elle ne va pas à la mettre en accusation, même en poésie. En fait, c'est souvent à deux ou à trois formes de critique normative que l'œuvre est vouée: logique, morale et esthétique; toutes les valeurs de la connaissance (philosophiques et autres), de la conduite (y compris la politique) et de l'art (y compris son refus) s'y trouvent visées. Ce problème, qui a toujours existé, était moins gênant autrefois, parce qu'il restait renfermé dans ce qu'on est convenu d'appeler le contenu de l'œuvre et n'altérait pas sensiblement la portée artistique de celle-ci: aujourd'hui il tend à en altérer la structure même et à en discréditer la valeur esthétique. C'est en critique moraliste que M. Picon admire chez Saint-Exupéry "le son d'un désintéressement absolu," ou, chez Bernanos, "la santé inaltérable de son instinct." Il en va de même quand il loue la "sincérité désarmée" de Drieu La Rochelle, la "grandeur désespérée" de Michaux, la générosité de Prévert, et, dans l'œuvre scandaleuse de Jean Genet, "son étrange innocence," ce qui peut déconcerter les admirateurs de la "génération éthique" de 1930, qui n'auront qu'à se rappeler qu'on a souvent exalté, ou condamné, Gide, Rimbaud ou Baudelaire pour des motifs qu'il faut bien qualifier de moraux.

Bien entendu, les appréciations esthétiques ne manquent pas chez M. Picon, et sans ces motifs il ferait bon marché des autres, en quoi il est lui-même un traditionaliste: il ne jette pas par-dessus bord l'exigence artistique comme prétendent le faire, plus ou moins sincèrement, tant de contemporains, qui, en fait, et c'est tant mieux, se gardent bien de suivre jusqu'au bout cette intention destructrice. Il n'est pas si sûr que Sartre soit, comme le propose de façon frappante M. Picon, un "grand écrivain sans style," ni même "le premier." Si les éloges sont nombreux dans les analyses de M. Picon, il est plus difficile de les rattacher à quelques normes. Cela tient sans doute à ce qu'il loue aussi bien des qualités traditionnelles et des vertus nouvelles, qui se mêlent dans les œuvres qu'il étudie, et qu'il n'est pas commode de leur trouver des dénominateurs communs. Cependant, de temps à autre, un principe général d'appréciation semble se dégager. S'il a choisi Michaux, Prévert, Ponge et Char pour en faire les "quatre poètes majeurs," c'est parce que "leur grandeur est dans leur différence." C'est bien là reconnaître comme un des fondements du jugement esthétique le principe de l'originalité. Toutes les monographies de M. Picon s'efforcent de cerner la particularité des écrivains qu'il examine. Mais il ne s'arrête pas là. Il excelle à montrer les limites d'une œuvre, les contradictions qui la ruinent, ou les écarts et les dangers qui menacent

l'inspiration d'un écrivain. Ainsi, Aragon est "à la recherche d'un monde qui est précisément l'inverse du sien: le monde de la passion"; toute son œuvre "tend vers l'enjeu avec les moyens du jeu." La conversion religieuse de Green l'amène "à rejeter ce qui a fait sa force: l'angoisse de l'incertitude, la fascination de la sensualité, la magie du fantastique." Sartre "ne parvient pas à faire vivre la liberté dans son univers romanesque comme il la vit dans sa pensée"; "il ne fera jamais rien de grand s'il trahit ses obsessions profondes"; la chance de son œuvre "est dans sa fidélité à elle-même: elle doit reconnaître qu'elle est une vision du monde plus qu'un message de vie." Camus donne l'impression d'une "force arrêtée à mi-chemin"; il "risque de passer du dépouillement à la pauvreté, de la sérénité à la froideur, de l'équilibre à l'immobilité." La voix d'un Breton déçu, qui se réfugie dans le passé, "n'a plus l'ardeur conquérante et insultante qui fut la sienne." Patrice de La Tour du Pin est "un lyrique intime et mineur qui veut parler comme Virgile et Dante." La lucidité de M. Picon est ici de premier ordre et fait vraiment de lui un critique complet.

On peut être sûr après cela que le choix de M. Picon est solidement motivé. Cependant certaines de ses exclusions paraîtront discutables. Ayant fait une place à Valéry, Gide et Claudel, justifiée, à ses yeux, par une actualité relative, qu'il montre surtout pour les deux premiers, on s'étonne qu'il ait écarté Proust et Giraudoux. "Si je ne parle pas de Proust, ce n'est pas que je l'ignore ou que je le conteste: c'est que son œuvre s'est éloignée de nous non seulement par sa date, mais par sa nature—parce qu'elle est le couronnement génial d'un symbolisme et d'un individualisme psychologique et analytique *momentanément* sans action sur nous." Cette dernière affirmation ne résisterait pas à l'examen. Je crois, par exemple, que, dans la *Nausée*, l'illumination de Roquentin devant la racine doit quelque chose à la madeleine de Proust et que l'épisode final du disque de jazz fait écho à la petite phrase de Vinteuil. Et surtout Proust a ouvert la voie au roman métaphysique. Pour Giraudoux, son influence paraît faible dans le sens de l'actualité; pourtant, le théâtre n'est plus tout à fait le même après lui et porte la trace de son jeu complexe avec l'anachronisme et l'allusion historique, de la grâce qu'il a rendue au dialogue, etc. . . . Même pour les gloires qu'il salue, M. Picon les rejette dans le passé un peu plus qu'il ne conviendrait. C'est évident pour Gide. Si on y regardait de plus près, Claudel lui-même réservait peut-être des surprises. Sans parler des auteurs moindres. On sait, de plus en plus, la complexité des influences réciproques: Hugo lisait les poètes secondaires de son temps, Balzac les mauvais romanciers de sa jeunesse, Baudelaire (rappelle M. Jean Pommier) avait une "nature singreresse." Mais les petits précurseurs sont toujours mangés. Tout de même, il ne serait pas indifférent de noter comment un Mac Orlan, un Salmon, un Elie Faure, un Pierre Hamp (M. Picon ne les nomme même pas) ont contribué à l'atmosphère des temps nouveaux. M. Picon n'a pas un mot pour Guilloux. Et il se dispense de traiter d'ensemble le cas Cocteau, dont l'urgence n'a pu cependant lui échapper puisque son index renvoie à

son nom quatorze fois. Le souci de séparer nettement le climat actuel des climats de 1930 et de 1920 entraîne à quelque injustice; il y a des infiltrations qu'il ne faut pas négliger.

Par contre, le choix des principaux auteurs retenus ne soulève guère d'objections. Les lecteurs avertis en seront satisfaits. On voit accéder à la consécration du manuel des auteurs moins connus à côté de gloires ou de réputations bien établies. Il n'y avait aucune hardiesse particulière à mettre en valeur Bernanos, Malraux, Aragon, Montherlant, Giono, Saint-Exupéry, Jouhandeau, Green, Sartre, Camus, Queneau, Reverdy, Super-vielle, Jouve, Perse, Eluard, Breton, Michaux, Prévert, Benda et Paulhan. La promotion de M. Picon porte surtout sur deux poètes originaux, Char et Ponge, déjà très appréciés (le premier a été étudié comme un classique dans le livre de M. Georges Mounin, le second a des lecteurs, peu nombreux mais admiratifs, depuis près de trente ans, et a été consacré par un grand article de Sartre), trois conteurs de grand talent, Genet, Devaulx et Gracq (le premier, peu lu, partiellement clandestin, a bénéficié d'un succès de scandale; le second, découvert par Paulhan; le troisième, salué par Breton comme une sorte de classique du roman surréaliste), et quatre essayistes marquants que, parmi d'autres, M. Picon tire hors de pair: Caillois et Maulnier pour leur valeur d'opposition au courant actuel, Monnerot et Bataille pour leur engagement dans la tragédie contemporaine. Le lecteur devinera facilement les raisons qui ont amené M. Picon à placer sous une lumière moins vive des auteurs qu'il estime, du reste, infiniment et dont il parle avec chaleur, parmi les anciens: Artaud, Céline, Drieu, etc... parmi les plus jeunes: Patrice de La Tour du Pin, Emmanuel, Guillevic, etc....

Il reste à considérer comment jouent, à l'intérieur des œuvres qu'examine M. Picon, les forces qu'il y décèle. Elles se rapportent essentiellement à ce qu'Apollinaire appelait "cette longue querelle de la tradition et de l'invention, de l'Ordre et de l'Aventure." Toute œuvre qui compte est une révélation, et c'est donc par ses traits nouveaux qu'elle frappe et qu'elle devient imitable. Mais elle mêle à ces éléments originaux des éléments anciens qui en facilitent la compréhension: une œuvre intégralement nouvelle serait impensable. M. Picon est particulièrement sensible à cette double perspective. La nouveauté et la tradition sont les deux leitmotive de son livre.

La nouveauté qui l'intéresse a cependant un caractère beaucoup plus social et moral qu'esthétique. Sans doute, il est bien loin de méconnaître les apports artistiques personnels des écrivains qu'il nous présente, mais c'est surtout la nouveauté du climat spirituel qui le retient, et, comme, en définitive, c'est la communauté de participation à cette atmosphère de notre temps qui lui sert à décider si tel ou tel écrivain mérite d'être considéré, il en résulte que les originalités individuelles tendent à se fondre dans une originalité collective. Là encore, M. Picon est plus historien qu'esthéticien. Il y a pour lui un romantisme, un réalisme, un symbolisme, un surréalisme, un existentialisme, et, sur le plan historique, c'est fort

concevable, à condition que le tableau soit complet, le constat objectif, et non vicié par l'intrusion de jugements de valeur. Pour une critique esthétique, au contraire, c'est le fait que les grandes œuvres échappent à leur localisation historique qui les rend intéressantes; leur originalité ne dépend plus de leur relation à un moment, mais de leur confrontation avec les autres grandes œuvres du patrimoine de l'humanité. Qu'elles soient en accord ou en désaccord avec les tendances principales de leur temps n'est plus qu'un trait contingent qui ne regarde que l'historien, et qui ne permet que d'expliquer le succès ou l'insuccès du moment. La valeur des romans de Stendhal n'est nullement liée à son rapport personnel avec le public ni à l'opinion de la critique de son temps. M. Picon nous dit que toute la poésie contemporaine tourne le dos à la poésie de Valéry, mais qu'est-ce que cela signifie, sinon que la mode change, que les générations se suivent et ne se ressemblent pas, et qu'il n'y a qu'un problème: celui des garants internes de durée d'une œuvre, quelles que soient les fluctuations provisoires d'une partie de l'opinion?

C'est le souci d'appartenir les écrivains entre eux et avec les formes les plus récentes de la conscience collective qui amène M. Picon à présenter ses auteurs par groupes homogènes: les derniers classiques, la génération éthique, le naturalisme métaphysique, la littérature de transfiguration, la nouvelle poésie, les opposants, etc.... Même pour les "quatre poètes majeurs" qu'il loue de leur différence, il s'ingénie à les unifier: Michaux et Prévert ont en commun "le réalisme poétique" et incarnent "la poésie en son sens le plus moderne, c'est-à-dire ce que peut être encore la poésie quand on a cessé de croire en elle"; Michaux, Prévert et Ponge s'accordent dans "la résistance à l'état lyrique" et, avec Char, ils renoncent à utiliser le "merveilleux mécanisme poétique qui semble garantir la réussite à tous coups" offert par le surréalisme. Il va de soi que ce n'est pas par ce partage de refus que tous quatre sont de grands poètes.

La tentative la plus curieuse à ce point de vue est celle où M. Picon entend relier à l'actualité contemporaine des écrivains plus âgés, qui y échappent par tant de côtés. Il semble parfois que leur plus grand mérite à ses yeux soit d'avoir été des précurseurs et des prophètes: "Si les premiers essais de Bernanos ont pris une actualité extraordinaire, c'est sans doute qu'ils sont la prophétie pathétique des catastrophes qu'une illusoire prospérité nous dissimulait." L'œuvre de Malraux "a brusquement grandi sous nos yeux parce que le monde s'est mis à lui ressembler." Céline, avec le *Voyage au bout de la nuit*, "annonce et domine le désespoir contemporain." Ce que Green appelle "l'étoffement," Sartre l'appellera "la nausée." Reverdy, en avance sur l'époque, et déjà à l'origine du surréalisme, est le précurseur du "réalisme poétique." Même Supervielle peut apparaître comme un exemple, une source. Les recueils de Jouvet sont "frémissons de présages." On peut même devenir précurseur si l'on a amorcé un retour à des formules anciennes (Perse, Audiberti). Mais le plus sûr est d'avoir écrit une œuvre prophétique, que les temps nouveaux actualisent. En sorte

que, si Sartre n'était pas né, ou n'avait pas eu assez de talent pour que la philosophie existentialiste trouvât une expression littéraire (ce qui a manqué à d'autres philosophies), l'œuvre de Malraux aurait perdu une partie de sa valeur. Il faut être plus sociologue que je ne le suis pour laisser l'esthétique abdiquer à ce point devant l'histoire. Peu d'œuvres ont eu plus de portée que *l'Astrée* ou la *Nouvelle Héloïse*; si on ne les relit plus guère, ce n'est pas parce que la sensibilité a changé, c'est parce que, si admirables qu'elles soient partiellement (et ce pourquoi on les lit encore quelque peu), elles avaient, en tant qu'œuvres romanesques, des vices internes de toutes sortes qui les ruinaient par avance. Bref, il y a grand danger à confondre la nouveauté des mœurs avec l'originalité artistique.

En sens inverse, M. Picon est très attentif à noter chez ses auteurs des traits classiques, traditionnels (de diverses traditions) ou des tendances à contre-courant. Cela va de soi pour les auteurs de la déjà vieille génération: Bernanos, Aragon, Malraux, Saint-Exupéry, Perse et même Eluard. Mais il est plus instructif encore de relever la persistance des valeurs anciennes chez les plus jeunes et les plus modernes des écrivains actuels: la tradition qui va des moralistes au naturalisme chez Sartre, le classicisme chez Camus et chez Ponge, le romantisme chez Gracq, le surréalisme chez celui-ci et chez Char, qui continue aussi à sa façon le lyrisme, les formes anciennes de l'éloquence et de la prosodie chez les "poètes de circonstance," Emmanuel, Patrice de la Tour du Pin, la poésie orale et populaire chez Prévert. . . . M. Picon aurait pu déceler encore bien d'autres persistances; par exemple, dans la prose appliquée de Ponge, aussi composite que le vers fabriqué de Valéry, un certain mallarméisme, du Jules Renard, même du Buffon, et l'héritage de tous les prosateurs de style surveillé dont le Littré fournit l'anthologie. Queneau a parfois, dans ses poèmes, l'allure d'un Corbière existentialiste; et ses romans prouvent que l'ironie de Flaubert et celle de Gide ne lui sont pas étrangères. Beaucoup d'autres auteurs "actuels" apparaîtront de plus en plus liés au passé. Les malices de l'influence sont infinies.

Ces traits traditionnels portent plus souvent sur des caractéristiques de forme que de fond, comme il est naturel, car la matière change plus vite que la manière. Or l'appréciation des formes littéraires se fait d'ordinaire par référence aux réussites du passé; elle est volontiers comparative et rétrospective. Je crois, cependant, que le vrai problème, pour la critique esthétique (dont M. Picon note très bien qu'elle s'efforce d'être "intemporelle"), consisterait à dégager des pures influences de langue ou de l'héritage des procédés techniques les conditions de structure générale ou d'équilibre qui échappent au temps et qui pourraient servir de critère universel. Alors on pourrait juger les écrivains non par les qualités d'autres écrivains qu'ils rappellent, mais par leur rapport à des constantes.

Dans la dernière partie de son livre, M. Picon s'est interrogé sur l'avenir de la littérature. Il constate d'abord que la "commune mesure" des œuvres qu'il vient d'étudier consiste dans "leur participation à un certain état de

*crise de la littérature.*" Celle-ci est caractérisée par "le malaise." M. Picon en fait remonter les causes au romantisme. Certains proposent, ou incarnent, "la restauration des conditions classiques de la littérature," mais la plupart des écrivains significatifs "défendent l'actualité dont ils vivent" et "s'appliquent à justifier cette métamorphose": pour eux, "l'avenir est à la littérature non littéraire," qui "aura renoncé à elle-même et s'engager . . ."; elle pratiquera un "langage direct," un style de la pensée, de l'objet, ou de la parole même, qui "veut être un style sans style." "Le moment semble venu où l'objet va se libérer du langage, où l'écriture va être assassinée par la parole."

Après ce procès-verbal lucide et pessimiste, M. Picon précise sa position. Il ne croit pas aux restaurations. La littérature ne peut redevenir classique, c'est-à-dire, selon lui, conforme aux règles et aux catégories précises d'une tradition usée et périssante. Mais M. Picon ne croit pas non plus à la fécondité d'une littérature non littéraire. La littérature ne peut survivre qu'en "renouant un pacte avec le langage" (il marque par là son accord avec Paulhan). "Ecrire est toujours autre chose qu'exprimer ou que parler: c'est tenir à distance les pensées, les objets ou les images pour les marquer d'un signe; c'est retarder sa parole et s'attarder sur sa parole. Il suffirait que notre littérature retrouvât l'orgueil du geste souverain qui est le sien et que les hommes attendent d'elle, parce qu'ils y voient une preuve irremplaçable de leur propre pouvoir. Geste de possession qui n'est pas toujours joie, mais qui s'appelle toujours victoire; qui n'est pas toujours un geste de beauté, mais qui est toujours un geste de maîtrise." Donc, pas de néo-classicisme, ni dans la forme ni dans le fond, mais exigence d'un style nouveau imposé à un donné nouveau. On sera facilement d'accord avec M. Picon sur ce programme, qui a toujours été le programme des créateurs. Mais on sera moins pessimiste que lui, parce qu'on ne croit pas que le pacte avec le langage ait été vraiment rompu (après tout, presque toutes les œuvres marquantes de la littérature contemporaine nous sont compréhensibles, et, parmi celles qui préservent leur opacité, les meilleures sont vouées à un éclaircissement rapide), ensuite parce que les plus originales ont certainement un style (et même "le style sans style" peut apparaître, sous certaines conditions, comme un style supérieur fort voisin de l'idéal classique), enfin parce que le drame des crises de croissance n'est pas sans exemple dans l'histoire des littératures et qu'il témoigne d'une fécondité, inconnue aux périodes de stagnation, assez souvent prometteuse de chefs-d'œuvre.

Le *Panorama* de M. Picon ne décevra pas ses lecteurs, et, s'ils ne sont pas toujours d'accord avec lui, ils ne pourront du moins s'empêcher d'être frappés de son exceptionnel intérêt. C'est proprement un livre témoin, et même, pour parler comme on fait aujourd'hui, et comme M. Picon assez souvent, un livre de témoin engagé, on dirait presque de partisan objectif. Par là, il est bien de son temps. Et il vient en son temps, quatre ans après la fin de la seconde guerre mondiale, comme était venu, après le même

intervalle de réflexion, en 1922, l'*Histoire de la littérature française contemporaine* de René Lalou, dont la lucide révision des valeurs eut alors le succès que l'on sait. Mais tandis que Lalou examinait la littérature des cinquante dernières années sans majorer particulièrement la production récente et entendait présenter une histoire pouvant "être lue comme un récit, voire un récit d'aventures," M. Picon centre son étude sur les quinze dernières années et répudie, au moins en principe, tout projet historique. A l'impartialité large de Lalou, s'oppose l'impartialité étroite de M. Picon. Ils diffèrent comme un Girondin d'un Montagnard. Et pourtant, sous les différences qui paraissent irréductibles, les deux œuvres sont moins étrangères l'une à l'autre que ne pourraient le penser leurs auteurs. Ils pourraient se donner la main, si ce geste était encore dans le style d'aujourd'hui. En 1922, Lalou procédait à des exécutions et à des promotions, qui, dans un cadre moins restreint, n'étaient pas moins radicales que celles de M. Picon. En 1949, M. Picon a des intransigeances et des complaisances qui surprendront peut-être dans vingt ans autant que celles de Lalou, bien qu'il ait une autre manière de déblayer et que son tamis soit d'une autre espèce. Tous deux se proposaient d'ailleurs un programme analogue, et parfois dans les mêmes termes: en se défendant des partis pris politiques, affirmer une hiérarchie des valeurs et offrir un guide aux lecteurs, notamment aux jeunes gens et au public étranger. Ce programme a été rempli, dans les deux cas, avec succès et un grand bonheur de formules. Pour tous ceux qui s'intéressent à la littérature française, le Picon rejoindra le Lalou, comme le Jasinski a rejoint le Lanson, sur le rayon des manuels indispensables.<sup>2</sup>

#### *Columbia University*

2. Menues erreurs. Quelques poètes ont commencé à publier plus tôt que ne le dit M. Picon: Robert Ganvo avant 1942 (*Orénoque* est de 1937), Gabriel Audisio bien avant 1938 (*Hommes au soleil* est de 1923).—A propos de St.-John Perse: "A l'époque des premiers recueils, *Anabase*, *Eloges*, il y a vingt ans . . .": *Anabase* est de 1924, *Eloges* de 1911.—"Robert Desnos (1900-1945) . . . mourut en juin 1944": Desnos est mort le 8 juin 1945.—"Le petit garçon d'*Environs de l'absence* est un ange": dans le conte de Noël Devaulx, c'est une petite fille qui est l'ange.—"Il y a un mot qui n'apparaît pas dans la *Nausée* . . . : le mot *Liberté*." On lit, page 202 de ce roman: "Est-ce que c'est ça, la liberté? . . . Je suis libre: il ne me reste aucune raison de vivre . . . Seul et libre. Mais cette liberté ressemble un peu à la mort."—Dans l'index et dans le texte, lire: Vielé-Griffin au lieu de Vielé-Griffin, Valery Larbaud au lieu de Valéry-Larbaud, Guy Michaud au lieu de Guy Michaux.

## REVIEWS

*Dialogue de Saint-Julien et son disciple. Poème anglo-normand du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle.* Édité par Adrien Bonjour. (Anglo-Norman Texts, VIII) Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1949. Pp. xxvii + 93.

The dialogue of St. Julian and his disciple is an Anglo-Norman verse adaptation of a dialectic prose treatise on the corruption of this world and the hope of salvation, written by Julian, who was archbishop of Toledo 680-690. The Anglo-Norman poem has been studied by Paul Meyer and Tanquerey, but Mr. Bonjour gives us the first edition to be made of it. For once, three French-speaking critics have found an Anglo-Norman poet whose language and metric are practically "correct." The poet has also a certain felicity of style not always found in compositions of this content. He gives life and individuality to his two characters, and introduces occasional narrative or dramatic interest into what was originally a vast collection of quotations made by Julian as a saintly counter-irritant to gout.

The editor's close acquaintance with the anonymous poet—fruit of his labors on the text—prompts him to rise gallantly to his author's defense against Tanquerey's unsympathetic evaluation. His appreciation of the Anglo-Norman writer, agreeably expressed in the latter part of the introduction, is developed in the notes by running comments on the style. All of this might well have been placed at the opening of the introduction, for there can be no harm in putting the best foot foremost, especially when those outside the fold are beginning to complain that Anglo-Norman texts have a tendency to be dull.

The purpose of the Anglo-Norman Text Society is to publish works of literary, linguistic, historical and legal value and interest, choosing those which have hitherto remained inedited or been inadequately done. This eighth in the series contributes to literary and linguistic history. A carefully established text is accompanied by a succinct analysis of linguistic features and style. The apparatus and notes give a clear idea of the state of the manuscripts and show the editor's line of reasoning in drawing his conclusions. The glossary is selective, intended for the reader with a general knowledge of Old French or with Godefroy's dictionary at hand, and will be one of the useful sources of the Anglo-Norman glossary which is now in active preparation by the Society under Miss Stone's direction.

This edition is competently done and leaves little to be desired. The few misprints are mainly self-correcting. Tanquerey's edition of *Plaintes de la Vierge* (1921), cited in another context on page xviii, seems to have fallen out of the bibliography for MS L (page xi). A date for the reference to Lowes on page 64 (note to line 163) would be useful, since the pagination changes in some editions. The theological and scriptural origins of the *Ubi sunt?* theme (same line and note), which appears frequently in literature,

were discussed by Etienne Gilson in *Les Idées et les lettres* (Paris, 1932), pages 9-30 (accompanied by a brief bibliographical table for the history of the theme in comparative literature, pages 31-38). Mr. Bonjour gives an interesting discussion of a paleographical problem on page 73: lacking a reproduction of the curious marginal sign we should have liked to have a description of its shape. Indeed the edition would have benefited from the inclusion of a plate to show the period of the handwriting as well as this particular note.

The text we now have available illustrates one way theological problems were discussed in the thirteenth century. The approach is on a simple personal level, so that the poem offers matter of comparison with such works as the *Lumière as lais* and the *Manuel des péchés*. Editions of these better-known works are still lacking, but are promised for the near future by Miss Legge and Professor Arnould respectively.

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*The Other World according to Descriptions in Medieval Literature.* By Howard Rollin Patch. (Smith College Studies in Modern Languages) Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1950. Pp. ix + 386.

Thoughts of an Other World have always engaged man's imagination; recently the literature inspired by those thoughts has engaged the attention of several editors and scholars in this country and France. As the aims of all are different, there is little overlapping in their treatment of material. Of the works dealing with the Middle Ages, that under review is the most extensive and critical.

Professor Patch's aim is to see whether the background of a given literary work can be identified in folklore. In a study close-packed with illustration and clarified by periodic recapitulations, he has examined the debt of medieval European literature to ancient and contemporary mythology and folklore from India to Ireland. His material is restricted to descriptions of the Other World as a desirable country. Variations on the theme of purgatory and hell are excluded except when they are associated with the route to paradise.

The author has not limited himself to works directly concerning the Other World, and has found material in *chansons de geste*, histories, romances, lays and ballads, as well as in the vision literature, allegory and didactic treatises which suggest themselves as more likely sources. Much more, he warns us, remains to be done, and this book is intended as an *état présent* to guide subsequent investigators. But certain points already emerge from Professor Patch's study. In several of the characteristic motifs of Occidental vision literature he sees more relation to Jewish and Oriental sources than to Germanic or Celtic. Indeed, in the field as a whole his

accumulation of instances shows that there was more use of Eastern material than has been generally supposed. In studying allegories, Professor Patch has found that the symbolism attached to descriptions of the Other World may vary from one work or period to another. Classical influence dominates in this group, but the literature of visions, earthly paradise and Celtic mythology also contributes. Both allegory and romance contain Other World elements once religious but in the course of the Middle Ages shorn of credence and directed to another purpose. In our own day, the author points out, features which had become arid in later medieval literature have been brought back to religious use in T. S. Eliot's *Ash Wednesday*.

Two recent French publications on Professor Patch's theme have had different aims while using similar material. Some of the better-known medieval accounts of the Other World (Brendan, Patrick, Alberic) were published in a modern French version by Jean Marchand in 1940,<sup>1</sup> but without critical examination of the field. Immediately after the war Francis Bar, interested like Professor Patch in folklore, produced a briefly analytical survey of the same general field, more extensive in some directions, but restricted by considerations of space chiefly to narrative summaries and with the emphasis on places of torment.<sup>2</sup>

The theme took a sharply different course when modern scientific interest developed. Marjorie Hope Nicolson has examined various aspects of it for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as related to the idea of a world in the moon.<sup>3</sup>

Despite these and earlier studies,<sup>4</sup> an interpretation of the successive phases of the Other World theme in terms of the spirit of successive civilizations still remains to be made. Anyone who attempts it will be deeply indebted to Professor Patch's *mise au point*. Scholars in other fields as well may find guidance in his remarks concerning the methodology of source study. He concludes that it is impossible to identify the origin of single elements or motifs without considering them in their relationship to other features of the plot: they must be seen as part of the larger pattern created by the author. This observation, important as a corrective to certain past studies and as a guide to future research, is demonstrated in *The Other*

1. *L'Autre Monde au moyen âge: voyages et visions* (Poèmes et Récits de la Vieille France, 17), (Paris: Boccard, 1940).

2. *Les Routes de l'autre monde. Descentes aux enfers et voyages dans l'autelà* (Mythes et Religions, 17), (Paris: Presses Universitaires, 1946).

3. *A World in the Moon: a Study of the Changing Attitude toward the Moon in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Smith College Studies in Modern Languages, XVII<sup>2</sup>), (Northampton, Mass.), 1936, and *Voyages to the Moon* (New York: Macmillan, 1948).

4. Prof. Patch's bibliography is extensive. When it was compiled, F. J. Carmody's edition of Brunetto Latini's *Li Livres dou tresor* (Paris, 1947) had not appeared in this country (p. 352). A few additional items may be gleaned from Marichal's review of Bar which was also delayed: *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* CVI (années 1945-1946), 2<sup>e</sup> livraison (1947), p. 371.

*World* and likewise in his recent paper illustrating the application of the method to individual works.<sup>5</sup>

Professor Patch has anticipated the only objection one might have been tempted to make to the study of this wealth of imaginative material: endless repetition of the features becomes monotonous. Dante alone, he feels, redeemed its triteness by making his symbolism convey spiritual delight. Professors Patch and Bar agree in their final appraisal: every recurrence reveals man's invincible hope and shows him released from evil and rejoicing in his vision.

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*The Legendary History of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae and Its Early Vernacular Versions.* By J. S. P. Tatlock. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1950. Pp. xi + 545.

Since the late Professor Tatlock published his studies of Laȝamon's style in 1923, he concentrated his attention more and more on the legendary history of Britain elaborated by Geoffrey of Monmouth, published several articles on such peripheral matters as the same author's *Vita Merlini* and other more or less contemporary Latin writings which introduce Arthur, and happily lived to complete the book now under review. It is an epoch-making treatment of an epoch-making work and supersedes in most respects all previous studies not only of Geoffrey but also of Wace and Laȝamon. The thousands of references to the historic records, the literature, the geography, the law, and the military strategy of the twelfth and earlier centuries, and the careful attention to minutiae leave one with a sense of awe at the indefatigable energy which produced a tome like this, not in a lifetime but in the comparatively brief period of fifteen years.

For Romance scholars the chief matters of interest are the treatment of Wace and of the early history of the Arthurian legend. To the former subject Tatlock contributes a judicious review of familiar biographic facts and literary estimates, and adds some points not generally recognized. Laȝamon's testimony that Wace gave his poem to Eleanor of Aquitaine does not mean that there was a formal dedication (none of the twenty-four MSS contains such a passage) but simply the gift of a presentation copy. The title of "maistre" which Wace gave himself suggests that he was a teacher, and his familiarity with the southwest of England shows that he must have traveled in that region. Tatlock successfully demolishes Imelmann's hypothesis that there was once an expanded version of the *Brut*. In all this he shows himself the rational and clear-minded scholar described in the preface of his devoted disciple and literary executor, Mrs. Germaine Dempster.

5. "The Adaptation of Otherworld Motifs to Medieval Romance" in *Philologica: The Malone Anniversary Studies*, ed. T. A. Kirby and H. B. Woolf (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1949), pp. 115-123.

In dealing with the famous passages which Wace added to Geoffrey's account of Arthur, however, there is evidence of a bias which, in this reviewer's opinion, constitutes the one serious flaw in an otherwise sound work. In lines 9787-98 (I. Arnold's edition), Wace declared that during a period of peace following Arthur's conquests the marvels and the adventures occurred "ki d'Artur sunt tant racuntees," and adds that the *cunteur* and *fableur* have so embellished these matters as to make them all seem mere fables. If these assertions stood alone, Tatlock would be justified in saying (page 471): "There is no means of telling of course whether such anecdotes came from earlier tradition (told perhaps of someone else), or were lately invented by *conteurs* stimulated by Geoffrey's *Historia*." In lines 9747-60 (Arnold's edition) occurs the other familiar passage which concerns the making of the Round Table, "dunt Bretun dient mainte fable." Again Tatlock is justified in saying (page 473), "I find no sound argument for Welsh origin,"<sup>1</sup> but he is open to challenge when he proclaims (page 474): "As to the 'mainte fable' told by the Britons of the Round Table, if anything much is intended besides a rime for 'table,' Wace would have heard them from French *conteurs*, who truly or falsely would ascribe them to the Britons, just as later for centuries some 'Breton lais' were so ascribed, by no means always truly."<sup>2</sup> Tatlock justifies this skeptical attitude as follows: "Here as elsewhere in this book my intention has been to reject any mere presumption of early tradition, and impartially to consider what evidence there is for it."

Note the word "impartially." Many readers will share my feeling that the accumulated evidence for a widespread Arthurian tradition, antedating Wace and Geoffrey or uninfluenced by them, has been dismissed not only here but elsewhere, in a manner far from judicial. I have discussed this question so fully in an earlier number of this journal<sup>3</sup> that here I will content myself with summarizing certain points. As to the existence of legends of Arthur among the Welsh, Tatlock argues (pages 194-201) that Welsh literary scholarship is incompetent to judge the dating of native texts. This claim might have been true until thirty years ago, but since the

1. In chap. VI of my *Arthurian Tradition and Chrétien de Troyes* (New York, 1949) I have shown that, though the Welsh could not have originated the tradition of a round table as a material object, the legends of Arthur's Round Table were derived from Irish sagas which describe kings as seated at banquets with their twelve chief warriors around them. This circular seating arrangement must have carried over into Welsh tradition and been passed on to the Bretons, who, being accustomed to eat at a table of some size, naturally added this article of furniture. Thus and thus only can the whole complex of legends about the Round Table which Wace attributed to the Bretons (not the Welsh) be explained.

2. Though it is true that some lais ascribed to the Bretons (e.g. *Lai d'Haveloc*, Chaucer's *Franklin's Tale*) were drawn from quite other sources, most examples of this type give ample internal evidence of their genuineness. Cf. my *Arthurian Tradition*, pp. 21-23, 27-30, on the Breton *conteurs* and singers of lais. On Celtic elements in the lais, cf. *ibid.*, pp. 90, 98 f., 124, 130-133, 271 f., 326 f., 358; T. P. Cross in *Revue Celtique*, XXXI (1910), 413 ff.; *MP*, XII (1915), 585 ff.

3. XXXII (1941), 3 ff.

work of Morris-Jones and Sir Ivor Williams, it is no longer admissible. The latest verdict of Welsh scholarship assigns *Kulhwch*, in which of course Arthur plays a glorious role, to the tenth century, though details may have been added about 1100.<sup>4</sup> Tatlock would brush this aside for three reasons: the *Four Branches of the Mabinogi* make no mention of Arthur; the Welsh saints' lives take a hostile attitude toward him; since *Kulhwch* shows a wide knowledge of foreign countries, it was probably inspired by the *Historia*. To these arguments one may reply as follows: the silence of the *Four Branches* no more proves that Arthur was unknown than it proves that the Troy legend was unknown. Hagiographers naturally exalt the saints at the expense of secular heroes.<sup>5</sup> In spite of some inevitable coincidences between the geographical knowledge displayed in *Kulhwch* and the *Historia* there is not a single demonstrable borrowing by the former from the latter; on the contrary, the listing of places by Arthur's porter was plainly derived from an Irish formula found in the *Feast of Bricriu* (eighth century).<sup>6</sup> To oppose such feeble considerations to the judgment of specialists on the dating of Welsh texts is not a mark of impartiality, but rather of its opposite.

Other evidence for the existence of an Arthurian saga before Geoffrey's time receives inadequate refutation. The Modena archivolt, depicting Arthur, Gawain, Kay, Caradoc, and others, is dated by the practically unanimous verdict of art historians today in the first or second decade of the twelfth century.<sup>7</sup> The style, the cathedral records, the armor, the name forms, all harmonize. Tatlock dismisses these expert opinions as of no value, but offers no evidence for a later date than the mere improbability that anything could have inspired the sculptor except the vogue of the *Historia*. But the *Historia* contains no scene remotely resembling the carving at Modena; on the contrary, the carving shows affinities with Celtic and Arthurian romance.<sup>8</sup>

Though Tatlock discusses Herman of Laon's attestation of Cornish legends and beliefs about Arthur (page 204), he omits the decisive phrase, "illius famosi secundum fabulas Britannorum regis Arturi," which proves that in 1113 the insular Britons told tales of Arthur. On another page (201) he really gives his case away; for, referring to the passage in Geoffrey's *Propheetia Merlini* (1134-5) about Arthur as the Boar of Cornwall—"In ore populorum celebrabitur, et actus eius cibus erit narrantium"—he says that "this gives no proof of more than the vogue among the Celts of Nennius' Arthur, and perishable embroidery on it by gifted story-tellers." This, then, proves the existence of oral traditions about Arthur before Geoffrey's time; and as to their perishability we have a continuous series

4. *Mabinogion*, trans. G. Jones and T. Jones, Everyman's Library (1949), p. ix. Tatlock, *Legendary History*, p. 195.

5. *RR*, XXXII, 32-34.

6. Loomis, *Arthurian Tradition*, p. 238.

7. *RR*, XXXII, 22 f.

8. T. P. Cross, W. A. Nitze, *Lancelot and Guenevere* (Chicago, 1930), pp. 22-59. R. S. and L. H. Loomis, *Arthurian Legends in Medieval Art* (New York, 1938), pp. 32-35.

of references to *conteurs* who made a livelihood with an Arthurian repertory down to 1212 at least.<sup>9</sup> The *Historia* itself derived the story of Arthur's birth and of his war with Lucius Hiberus, directly or indirectly, from such sources.<sup>10</sup> Chrétien de Troyes not only alludes to these reciters in *Erec*, but also incorporates in his other romances (except *Cligès*) much Celtic material which he could not have derived in any other way except, indirectly, from this tradition.<sup>11</sup>

What shakes one's confidence in Tatlock's judgment more violently than anything else is his attempt to deal with the question of Geoffrey's effect on Chrétien and the other early romancers. He admits that neither in the nomenclature nor in the incidents do these poets seem to have borrowed much from the *Historia*, but he claims one important sign of Geoffrey's all-pervasive influence, namely, that Arthur himself does little and his knights are credited with all the exploits and the glory. To quote (page 227): "In the earliest romances . . . Arthur is Galfridian background, his actions are colorless and obvious; to leave adventurous activity to his knights enhances his imperial grandeur." We are asked to believe that Chrétien and his successors were inspired by Geoffrey because they cast Arthur mainly in a role antipodal to that which he fills in the *Historia*!

Apart from this singular aberration, this unwillingness to admit the existence of a powerful romantic tradition of Arthur before 1136, this gross exaggeration of Geoffrey's inventive faculties and influence, *The Legendary History of Britain* deserves to be welcomed as one of the most important contributions to the subject that have ever been made.

ROGER SHERMAN LOOMIS

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*Sodalitas Erasmiana. I. Il Valore universale dell'Umanesimo.* Napoli: R. Pironti, 1950. Pp. 210.

This volume, accurately edited by Professors Giulio Vallese, Giuseppe Toffanin, and Mariano Gentile, contains reports of the meetings, discussions, and the texts of the papers delivered at the Organizational Assembly (Riunione Costitutiva) of the *Sodalitas Erasmiana* held in Rome from the twentieth to the twenty-third of September 1949. To Americans, the book is of special interest, since it represents a kind of conceptual prolongation, or presupposition, of an analogous symposium, just published by Henry Regnery in Chicago (editor, Arnold Bergstraesser), which collects the speeches given at the *Goethe Bicentennial* celebrated in Aspen in August of last year.

9. *Studi Medievali*, Nuova Serie, IX (1936), pp. 6 f.; J. L. Weston, *Legend of Sir Perceval*, I (London, 1906), 265; K. Bartsch, *Denkmäler der Provenzalischen Literatur* (Stuttgart, 1856), pp. 85-98; E. Faral, *Mimes français du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 1910), pp. 96-103.

10. W. J. Gruffydd in *Transactions of the Cymmrodorion Society*, 1912-1913, pp. 72-80. Loomis, *Arthurian Tradition*, pp. 95, 188-90.

11. Loomis, *Arthurian Tradition*.

The *Sodalitas Erasmiana* owes its inception to a suggestion of J. Huizinga, the outstanding Dutch historian. It is to Huizinga, likewise, that credit should be assigned for the establishment of *Erasmus*, the widely known international periodical, started in 1947, which has since then held aloft the torch of humanistic studies in a world swept by the technological hurricane. Among the chief aims of the *Sodalitas Erasmiana* is the clarification and determination of the cultural and spiritual forces symbolized by the word humanism: the support of the basic principles which constitute the essence of humanistic civilization. Since in America humanism seems to have acquired a strangely reactionary connotation, it is well to emphasize the atmosphere of superior liberalism in which the meetings of the *Sodalitas Erasmiana* unfolded, and in which all its members visibly share.

The *Riunione Costitutiva* took place, under the sponsorship of the Italian Government, at Palazzo Corsini, the seat of the *Accademia dei Lincei*. The general subject around which papers and discussions centered was: *Concept and Value of Humanism*. Discussions—in five languages, with frequent translations and résumés—were spirited and constructive. The breakup of subtopics includes: the relationships between humanism and historicism; between humanism and religion; humanism as *paideia*; humanism and art. The pick of Italian scholars was in attendance; speakers were sent by Austria, France, Germany, Holland, England, Sweden, and the United States (Professor G. A. Borgese, Helmut Hungerland, Thomas Munro of the Cleveland Museum of Art). Professor Toffanin was the moving spirit of this unusual intellectual banquet.

The results of the meetings are epitomized, with terse deftness, by Professor Mariano Gentile (pages 202–208). He traces, after Baldensperger, the geographical boundaries of humanism and points out that, territorially, the map of humanism is divided into the three regions of Latin humanism (with France as its heart), which is bound up with Greco-Roman culture; of Anglo-Saxon humanism, which is eager for a wider geographic and conceptual expansion; and of Germanic humanism, which shows its intolerance of tradition and its desire for more efficient and practical affirmations. From the religious viewpoint, the map of humanism is furrowed by an interweaving network of confessional differences. Such differences may be reduced to the fundamental distinction between those humanists who view Christianity as the perfection of human nature, enfeebled but not entirely corrupted by the Original Transgression, and those who believe that Christianity represents, instead, the way of redemption from that guilt which has tainted the roots of human spirituality. However, in spite of differences and divergences, humanists are brought together by a common educational formation. One of the most comforting conclusions of the Assembly—Gentile underlines—was that, in contemporary civilization, the prime reason for trusting in the vitality of humanism is represented by that aggregate of disciplines and educational ideals which were evolved within the Greco-Roman *paideia* (page 205).

Although Professor Gentile assures us that no definition of humanism emerged from the proceedings of the *Sodalitas Erasmiana*, the present volume contains two, one by Professor Gunaioli, the other by Professor von Ivanka, which seem eminently serviceable and worthy of transcription (pages 22, 14). Most of the speakers bring out the difference between humanism as an historical phenomenon, a periodological "tab," and humanism as an idea, or ideal, not bound to any special designation of time or space. In "ideal" humanism, two aspects are distinguished: the normative-canonic-exemplary (Humboldt-Goethe); and the activistic-pragmatic-agonal (Herder). There is unanimity in the acceptance of Professor Toffanin's conception (significance, essence, limits, irradiation) of humanism as an historical phenomenon.

A perusal of the printed papers brings to one's attention the clever condensation of the historical components of humanism in Rothacker's *Das philosophische Problem eines humanistischen Weltbildes*, an otherwise too schematic and circumlocutory contribution; a splendid analysis of the content of Augustine's universalism in Endre von Ivanka's *Humanismus und Latinität* (a significant performance, full of suggestions); Professor Toffanin's delineation of *The Renaissance Man*, full of hints, vistas and ingenious notations, whether its author proposes to our consideration the problem of how faithfully humanistic transnaturalism is mirrored in Renaissance portrait iconography as contrasted with Baroque iconography, discusses the antagonistic attitude of humanism to early modern nationalism, scores Burckhardt's *equivocation* in identifying individualism with Machiavellism, or explains (in strange agreement with Mr. Trinkaus' and Don Cameron Allen's studies) the obscure pessimism of the Renaissance; Professor Borgese's plan for a *respublica universalis* in which humanism would find its ultimate fruition; Renaudet's masterfully learned, superbly worded *Message humaniste et chrétien d'Erasme*; Santo Mazzarino's reflections on *Neo-Humanism and Ancient History*, an unfortunately all too brief paper, which, although patterning itself on analogous researches by Momigliano and Ferrabino, penetratingly stimulates the historical imagination and sets forth in its due light the importance of Riegl and Wickoff's researches into late Roman art; the lyrical sublimity and superhuman spirituality of Father Henry's essay on the humanism of Saint Paul; the recreation, from the inside, of Boethian ethos and its implications in Luigi Alfonsi's *L'Umanesimo boeziano*; the discrimination, within their fusion, of Hellenic and Roman factors in the concept of *humanitas* as forged in the Roman milieu of Scipio Aemilianus, by Gino Funaioli in his *Humanitas nel mondo antico*; and, last but not least, the congenial evocation of one of modern Italy's greatest poets, Giovanni Pascoli, in whom humanism was paradigmatically incarnated not only as a way of thinking, but as a mode of poetic creation, of feeling and living and putting into practice the most authentic *paideia*.

We note with interest that the German speakers, like Schalk and Rothacker, evince towards the humanism of the Goethe-Humboldt era

the same disinclination which Toffanin, for different reasons, displays towards it. Schalk, especially, marks off sharply the divergence between the Goethe-Humboldt ideal of the normativity of the classics from the historico-philological *Erforschung* of the nineteenth century. (Toffanin, in *La Fine del Logos*, sees, in the advent of scientific philology in the person of F. A. Wolf, the "end" of humanism.)

Professors Vallesse, Toffanin and Gentile have placed all of us under great obligation by editing this beautiful and solid volume, to which we wish the success and wide diffusion which it deserves in promoting the cause of the classical humanities.

ELIO GIANTURCO

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*The Infinite in Giordano Bruno. With a Translation of His Dialogue Concerning the Cause, Principle, and One.* By Sidney Greenberg. New York: King's Crown Press, 1950. Pp. 203.

Coleridge, a staunch admirer of Giordano Bruno, found in his works "a Principle, Spirit, and Eloquence of Piety and Pure Morality, not surpassed by Fénelon."<sup>1</sup> That he should thus connect Bruno with a great representative of French spirituality becomes less surprising when we recall the Italian's close affinity with French thought in the late years of the French Renaissance. Between 1581 and 1583 he was "extraordinary and provisional reader" to Henri III, who sent him on a secret mission to England, and he was closely associated with that monarch's Palace Academy, of which prominent members were Davy Du Perron and Pontus de Tyard. Indeed, the latter's *Discours philosophiques* may have suggested at least the form and encyclopedic range of Bruno's philosophic dialogues.<sup>2</sup>

Students of the Renaissance, and of philosophy in general, will be grateful to Dr. Greenberg for now making available in English translation one of the most important of these dialogues, *De la causa*. This is Bruno's attempt to find out the causes of the universe. Like a true Renaissance philosopher he offers first of all a synthesis of foregoing interpretations; rejecting Aristotle, he concludes, as Dr. Greenberg shows, in a pantheistic system, identifying God and Nature. In the present translation, the dialogue is eminently readable, revealing its author's literary bent, his humor, and his inherent common sense. Long passages of philosophical discussion are alleviated by brisk and earthy topical references, as when one speaker, warning against possible absurdities in the Platonic "world soul" doctrine, recalls the peasant who asked a preacher of his acquaintance how many ells of cloth it would take to make God's breeches, or when another compares his vocabulary to the blowsy charms of his childhood nurse.

1. Alice Snyder, *MLN*, XLII (1927), 433.

2. Cf. F.A. Yates, *The French Academies of the Sixteenth Century* (London: The Warburg Institute, 1947), p. 103.

Like a good disciple of his subject, Dr. Greenberg first provides, in his Introduction, a careful summary of all previous studies on Bruno; a useful synthesis of the views of ancient philosophy on the Infinite precedes his analysis of Bruno's conception. Lucretius, he shows, stands midway between Aristotle and Bruno; the Roman poet believed in the infinity of the universe, with an infinity of worlds existing in infinite space. Bruno's approach is dualistic: two infinites exist, the "extensive" infinite of the universe and the "intensive" infinite of substance. The infinity of universe and space is the mirror of the infinite substance, God. In the contemplation of the Infinite, man arrives at his ultimate good; that contemplation in turn is attained through his contemplation of the universe; in his search he progresses from the finite and the measured to the unlimited and immeasurable. The reader will find implications for literature and art in both *De la causa* and Bruno's idea of the Infinite. Much of the dialogue is typical of late Renaissance thought: its Platonistic tone, its opposition to pedantry and praise of the vernacular, its championing of women, its tendency toward religious syncretism. But his concept of the Infinite is also suggestive of the early Counter-Reformation and Baroque: Bruno's Infinite is the infinite of Racinian tragedy, it is the limitless universe before which Pascal quailed.

Dr. Greenberg's analysis is clear and thorough; he has succeeded in demonstrating the coherence of Bruno's formulation, despite its paradoxical qualities. Yet the book suffers somewhat from a seeming reluctance to situate Bruno with regard to modern philosophy. True, as the Introduction shows, this has been attempted by other students of Bruno, and the purpose of the book is to present an analysis of a single aspect of Bruno's thought; nevertheless, some widening of the scope would have made the book more readable. The style is at times rather wooden; one wishes that Dr. Greenberg had borrowed some of his subject's felicity and variety of phrase. The author has presented the translation of *De la causa* because, as he says, he feels that a commentary should be accompanied by that which it comments on (page 8). There seems to be a slight inconsistency here, since the author's account of Bruno's philosophy of the Infinite draws not only upon *De la causa* but also upon *De l'infinito*. A reprinting of the latter dialogue might have been useful. But these are minor details: the writer of this book has done a service to the history of ideas, and to all those interested in a great martyr of free thought.

JOHN C. LAPP

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*Pensées retranchées de Pascal*. Editées par Louis Lafuma. Paris: J. Hau-mont, 1944. Pp. 139.

*Trois pensées inédites de Pascal extraites du ms. de l'abbé Périer, son neveu*. Editées par Louis Lafuma. Paris: Editions Littéraires de France, 1945. Pp. 147.

Pascal: *Pensées*. 2 vols. Avant-propos et notes de Louis Lafuma. Paris: Delmas, 1947. Pp. 336 + 141.

*Recherches pascaliennes*. Par Louis Lafuma. Préface d'Albert Béguin. Paris: Delmas, 1949. Pp. 160.

*Discours sur les passions de l'amour*. Introduction et notes de Louis Lafuma. Paris: Delmas, 1950. Pp. 115.

*L'Auteur présumé du Discours sur les passions de l'amour, Charles Paul d'Escoubleau*. Par Louis Lafuma. Paris: Delmas, 1950. Pp. 23.

Les travaux considérables et patients où, depuis plusieurs années s'est engagé M. Lafuma, à la suite de M. Tourneur, nous apportent depuis deux ans des résultats qui semblent bien devoir renouveler entièrement certains aspects des études pascaliennes. L'histoire du manuscrit des *Pensées*, la controverse autour de l'attribution à Pascal du *Discours sur les passions de l'amour* entrent, grâce aux travaux de M. Lafuma, dans une nouvelle phase. Dans ses éditions des *Pensées* et du *Discours*, dans ses articles érudits réunis sous le titre *Recherches pascaliennes*, M. Lafuma nous raconte une histoire passionnante qui tient du roman policier, celle des recherches qui ont précédé ses travaux et qui apportent à ses conclusions des preuves irréfutables.

Entre 1785 et 1933, comme le signale M. Lafuma, treize éditeurs ont tenté de reconstruire, avec les *Pensées*, l'*Apologie* que Pascal projetait. De 1779 à 1935 neuf éditeurs ont essayé de trouver, sinon l'ordre projeté par Pascal pour l'*Apologie*, du moins un ordre cohérent de présentation pour les pensées. Autant de tentatives, autant d'ordonnances du texte. Dans l'ensemble, cependant, les éditeurs les plus récents des *Pensées* ont accepté pour vraies deux hypothèses que M. Lafuma, avec une méticuleuse étude, démolira. La première affirmait que Pascal écrivait ses pensées sur des morceaux de papier disparates, au hasard; la seconde supposait que les papiers de Pascal avaient été remis à un relieur qui les aurait découpés et collés au hasard lui aussi, sur les feuilles de son registre, donnant ainsi le *Recueil autographe des Pensées*, le manuscrit 9202 de la Bibliothèque Nationale.

Or, après de minutieuses et patientes études, portant sur le papier, les filigranes du papier, etc., M. Lafuma prouve que Pascal écrivait, non sur des morceaux de papier disparates, mais sur des feuilles de grand format. Il écrivait ses pensées soit en développements assez longs, soit en formules courtes, les unes après les autres, et les séparait d'un trait de plume. D'autre part, Pascal lui-même avait entrepris de classer ses notes. C'est ici que commence la révolution qu'apporte M. Lafuma dans les études pascaliennes.

M. Lafuma a la preuve, irréfutable semble-t-il, que vers 1658 Pascal commença à classer ses notes. Il disposait ses feuillets en liasses, elles-mêmes classées en un ordre choisi par lui, sous vingt-sept rubriques. Ce fut Pascal lui-même qui découpa les feuillets contenant des pensées appartenant à des chapitres différents. Il glissait les feuillets sur un clou, ou y perçait un trou à l'aiguille, réunissant ensuite chaque liasse avec du fil, procédé

grâce auquel M. Lafuma a pu reconstituer en partie les liasses. Pascal n'eut ni le temps, ni les forces de terminer ce classement. Dans ses *Recherches pascaliennes*, comme dans la préface de son édition des *Pensées*, M. Lafuma décrit, avec la précision objective qui caractérise son travail, comment il a pu reconstituer les liasses, et par suite comment il fut amené à présenter une nouvelle édition des *Pensées*. Son travail s'appuie sur une connaissance minutieuse des six documents originaux groupés à la Bibliothèque Nationale qui ont servi aux éditeurs successifs de Pascal et sur la découverte en 1944 d'un manuscrit des *Pensées*.

Ce manuscrit, M. Lafuma le prouve, est celui que possédait Sainte-Beuve, et dont la trace était perdue. C'est aussi le manuscrit de l'abbé Périer, disparu depuis 1776. M. Lafuma retrouvait ainsi d'un coup les deux sources manuscrites perdues que l'on savait avoir été utilisées par les éditeurs des *Pensées* de Pascal et qui manquaient à la Bibliothèque Nationale.

L'édition des *Pensées* de Pascal présentée par M. Lafuma comprend deux volumes. Le premier volume contient les vingt-sept liasses préparées par Pascal lui-même. Pascal cependant, laissait une quantité d'autres documents, de notes, qu'il n'avait pas pu classer. Là, nous retombons dans le domaine de l'hypothèse. Parmi ces documents, lesquels Pascal destinait-il à l'*Apologie*? Dans quelle liasse les aurait-il classés? M. Lafuma, qui a une profonde connaissance de l'esprit et de la pensée de Pascal, a complété les liasses avec le plus grand soin. Le texte ordonné par Pascal est toujours clairement séparé des passages que M. Lafuma lui-même y adjoint. Dans le deuxième volume, M. Lafuma groupe les pensées qui ne lui semblent pas devoir faire partie de l'*Apologie*: notes personnelles, notes pour le *Traité du Vide*, pour les *Écrits sur la grâce*, etc. Il semble bien désormais qu'en ce qui concerne l'*Apologie* et son classement, l'existence et l'ordre des vingt-sept liasses soient choses acquises que tout étudiant sérieux de Pascal ne puisse plus ignorer. Editer Pascal cesse d'être un jeu passionnant et arbitraire. La discussion ne peut plus porter que sur cette partie des *Pensées* que Pascal ne put classer.

Dès que parut cette édition des *Pensées*, elle souleva naturellement des controverses. Elle démolissait en partie les hypothèses de bien des pascaliens, de Brunschvieg en particulier. D'autre part, comme l'indique la préface de M. Béguin, d'autres pascaliens n'aimaient pas voir certains passages, comme le mémorial, rejetés de l'*Apologie*, pour prendre place dans les notes personnelles par exemple. Cependant les travaux de M. Lafuma gagnent de plus en plus de suffrages. Pour qui les étudie sans parti pris ils sont convaincants. L'on pourra, en effet, discuter la répartition que fait M. Lafuma des pensées non contenues dans les liasses; il y faudra cependant beaucoup d'érudition, si minutieuses, si précises, si objectives sont les méthodes de M. Lafuma. En tout cas, pour l'étudiant de Pascal, comme pour l'éditeur de Pascal, le champ est ouvert à de nouvelles études, bien plus solidement établies, portant sur la pensée et les intentions de Pascal. L'édition de M. Lafuma qui reproduit la numérotation de M. Michaut et

de M. Brunschvicg, qui est riche en notes et facile à manier, est un instrument de travail inappréciable.

Dans ses *Recherches pascaliennes*, par ailleurs, M. Lafuma soulevait un autre problème, celui de l'attribution à Pascal du *Discours sur les passions de l'amour*. Il suffit à ce propos de citer l'extrait de l'article de Maurice Rat, dans le *Figaro Littéraire* du 8 octobre 1949, que reproduisent les éditeurs de M. Lafuma dans l'"Avertissement" qui précède l'introduction de M. Lafuma à son édition du *Discours*:

Le Discours n'est pas de Pascal.

Il y a plus de cent ans qu'on en discute, et la question vient seulement d'être résolue.

La tradition cousinienne continuait d'en imposer et eût peut-être triomphé longtemps ... si le plus savant et le plus minutieux des pascaliens actuels, M. Louis Lafuma, ne venait de donner la démonstration décisive que *le Discours n'est pas et ne peut être de Pascal*.

Là encore, il semble bien que les preuves de M. Lafuma soient décisives. M. Lafuma attribue le *Discours* à Charles Paul d'Escoubleau. Comme toujours il fonde ses conclusions sur des travaux détaillés et maintes fois vérifiés. L'attribution n'en reste pas moins hypothétique, quoique convaincante, et sujette à discussion. En ce qui concerne l'œuvre de Pascal, il semble bien, par contre, que M. Lafuma ait raison.

Les travaux de M. Lafuma, faits avec un souci de précision et une modestie inégalés, apportent aux études pascaliennes des bases nouvelles et solides. M. Lafuma, dont l'érudition est profonde, y montre une tranquille et pénétrante connaissance de Pascal, et le plus grand respect du document auquel jamais ne vient chez lui se substituer quelque théorie préconçue. On ne peut guère lui reprocher que sa trop grande modestie de savant qui apporte au public d'aussi importantes études, sans le moindre fracas et sans le moindre souci de publicité.

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*Conservative England and the Case against Voltaire.* By Bernard N. Schilling. New York: Columbia University Press, 1950. Pp. xii + 394.

Mr. Schilling's admirable study divides itself into the two parts indicated in his title. The first and longer section is a description of the course of English social opinion throughout the eighteenth century. The second essay, which amounts to a third of the volume, is a splendid exemplum of such opinion, based upon the English attitude towards Voltaire, who visited England as a very real person in the early part of the century, and as a very real ghost somewhat later on. In his novel and valuable attempt to present the social mind of eighteenth-century England, Mr. Schilling sees a society which was conservative for many decades, which grew brilliantly liberal for a few years (beginning about 1769), and then became

conservative again when, having celebrated the anniversary of its own revolution in 1788, it was faced in the next year with the French Revolution.

In his handling of that conservative complex mastering England during the early majority of the century, Mr. Schilling has put together a public mind in which optimism and realism, confidence and fear almost equally participated. In these pages he has consulted the writings of the moralist, the theologian, and the popular metaphysician. We remember that when Boswell, who had inflicted himself upon the household of Ferney in the Christmas of 1764, put to Voltaire questions about the soul, the philosopher visibly swooned. Mr. Schilling's pages do not swoon over the metaphysical matters he has chosen to consider. I do feel though that these pages lack the brilliance of his writing when it touches material which is definitely social and political. With his studies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Mr. Schilling has now clearly established himself as an important historian of the social scene. Here one will admire at once his exploration, the directness of his information, his avoidance of sentimentality, and finally his moral courage in stating in challenging sentences the wisdom he has found.

One reads with great excitement the account of those two stirring decades following 1769, days described thus:

A spark will now set kingdoms in a blaze,  
That would not fire a barn in former days.

Mr. Schilling has much to tell one about the unrest of this brilliant period, the many efforts at social and constitutional reform. He has splendid information for the general and the special reader about such matters as the rise of the liberal societies, the Clapham Sect, the influence of Wesley, the activities of the early parliamentary reform groups, the political dealings of George III. Many readers will welcome a title which tells us more about those minor radicals who have been handled by such literary historians as Cestre, Brinton, and Schorer. There is mention of many of these here, and particularly interesting mention of Francis Blackburne, John Cartwright, James Burgh, and Richard Price. The excellent bibliographical notes too will be a special delight to those who like the lesser radicals. In the latter pages of this study of English opinion Mr. Schilling, again with great power, presents that odd last decade of the century when, paradoxically, "the English mob was . . . a conservative force." England had remained conservative from Hoadly to Horsley. The story of the century closes with impressive lines penned by Godwin in 1797.

The societies have perished, or . . . have shrunk to a skeleton; the days of democratic declamation are no more; even the starving labourer in the alehouse is become the champion of aristocracy....

Social studies inevitably (perhaps regrettably) observe the division of progressive and conservative. Mr. Schilling has of necessity written within

these categories. One's criticism of his work will therefore tend to challenge the way in which he has allowed the light and the dark to fall. His description of early eighteenth-century England as dominantly conservative is of course meant to be challenging. One must recognize, though, that this thesis is promoted by drawing figures into the conservative orbit who in actual fact neither did nor were allowed to keep such company. Adam Smith, Mandeville, Hume, Gibbon, Fielding, and even Gray are figures who can be grouped with the conservatives only with the facilities of technicality. Mr. Schilling's thesis, to be sure, gives opportunity to his subtlety and acuteness. These qualities are especially evident in his reading of Locke. Actually I think he would have avoided a slight suggestion of Lilliputian puffiness in his portrait of eighteenth-century England had he allowed to the early period its evident large and lesser divisions of mind.

The fact of factio is that thing which the responsible social historian must handle with greatest delicacy and circumspection. Was John Wilkes an atheist because he sat at the tables of atheists in Paris? Was Horace Walpole a Christian because he got up from these same tables? Was Garrick an atheist because he was intimate with the enemies of religion? Generally Mr. Schilling has made it clear when he is presenting opinion of the hearsay-slander variety, but in a very few instances his dissociation from vulgar opinion is not so clear as one would wish it to be. The social historian should avoid with greatest caution the ways of the easy factional mind. Perhaps our better intellectual history should encourage us to believe that each man is an individual who only hesitatingly subscribes or can subscribe to any variety of factio. And how well any particular social order contributes to the imaginative life of the individual is a question social historians might continually ask themselves. It is the question Mill, Blake, and many another have left with us.

The second division of Mr. Schilling's book is a case history of England's case against Voltaire. Here to be sure he is concerned not with the sharp mind of Voltaire, but with the blunt instruments of public opinion. One misses therefore, in the way of material, the sparkle of Voltaire's wit, but it is not too much to say that in the nice clarities and distinct ironies of Mr. Schilling's style there is a pleasure for those who want crispness in their Voltaire studies. In these lively pages Mr. Schilling has shown how it happened that English public opinion came in the last decade of the eighteenth century to consider Voltaire as the chief architect of the French Revolution. It is pleasant to be reminded that in the earlier part of the century Voltaire was known and admired in England as the author of the histories of Louis XIV and Charles XII, and of the *Essai sur les mœurs*, volumes which will always be remembered for their novel sociological approach to history. Just as in the case of David Hume, historical writing gave Voltaire an initial respectability. But then, after the middle of the century, as the ecclesiastical direction of his attention was emphasized,

Voltaire along with other *philosophes* came to be suspected in England of an intent to unravel not only the Church but all institutions tied to it. The irony here was of course that Voltaire had derived his antagonism to Christian thought and institutions from England's own deists. And actually Protestant England did not greatly mind his first assaults upon the French Catholic Church. Only when it became evident that the French Enlightenment could not be contained within one institution and within one country did England take full alarm. In the last decade of the century English panic included the suspicion that Voltaire had knowingly and insidiously plotted the political revolution in France. "Plot" and "conspiracy" haunted the English anti-Jacobin mind, giving it rich opportunity for subtle historical reconstruction.

Actually the popular detective story was written by one of that large group of *émigré* priests (8000 in all) who found themselves in England in 1794. The Abbé Augustin Barruel's thesis, elaborated in the *Memoirs Illustrating the History of Jacobinism* (1797), runs somewhat as follows. Voltaire, when he was first in England as a young man back in the days of deism, conceived a plot to overthrow the French monarchy. He would begin by undermining faith and Church. Needing a confederate, he first chose D'Alembert. The *Encyclopédie* was then projected, in Berlin actually, and with the help of Diderot. (German Illuminism stands waiting in the dark.) Frederick the Great was drawn into this conspiracy which now adopted an enigmatical language, special names for its leaders, and a rallying cry. Barruel's *Memoirs* are delightful reading for those who feel that the French Enlightenment was, if nothing else, blatant and flagrant. The plotters with the connivance of Pompadour and the duc de Choiseul effected the suppression of the Jesuits. Voltaire now decided to give himself the freedom of a Swiss postal address, and so moved to Ferney. His plan to settle his conspirators in a little colony at Cleves didn't go through because the plotters couldn't be pried away from Paris. The plot to pack the French Academy was more successful, and the conspirators seem also to have been successful in persuading the monarchs of Europe to run to their destruction. Joseph II, the Empress Catherine, the King of Denmark, the Queen of Sweden, Gustavus III, and the King of Poland, all, along with Frederick, became card-carriers. The secret clubs assisted. You couldn't meet a *philosophe* who wasn't a Mason. Finally in the Jacobin society Mirabeau uncovered the head of German Illuminism. The authorship of this successful conspiracy was acknowledged when, on the eleventh of July in 1790, the body of Voltaire, on a great high car drawn by twelve white horses harnessed in blue reins, moved through the crowded streets of Paris to its new resting place in the Pantheon.

Mr. Schilling is careful to point out the falsifications in this plot against Voltaire, which was promoted in England with the assistance of many clerics, many ladies, and even statesmen of the stature of Burke. Ladies

who blushed before the page of Voltaire would seem to have enjoyed the thought of his apishness in age, the agony of his death, and the final gruesomeness of exhumation. However, the occasion seems to have offered itself but rarely to such ladies of fleeing (as they all said they would!) from the drawing room in which they should find themselves with Voltaire. Mr. Schilling's book is a strong record of the ugliness of aggressive public opinion. Perhaps one will say that such public violence is a harmless thing which is quickly forgotten. But in the period which has followed since this final denunciation of Voltaire, we look rather in vain for those frequent and attractive fusions of French and English culture which were known in the days of Chaucer and of Dryden, and in the time too of Sterne and Boswell and the young Wordsworth.

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*Bibliographie de l'œuvre de Sainte-Beuve. II. Recueils de critique: Portraits contemporains.* Par Jean Bonnerot. Paris: L. Giraud-Badin, 1949. Pp. ix + 590.

M. J. Bonnerot a publié, ou plutôt a vu publier—enfin!—le second volume de sa monumentale *Bibliographie de l'œuvre de Sainte-Beuve*, dont le premier volume (*Critique, Portraits littéraires, Portraits de femmes*), paru il y a plus de douze ans, est presque inconnu aux Etats-Unis où il ne s'en trouve qu'une demi-douzaine d'exemplaires à peine. La compétence incomparable de l'auteur, son industrie qu'aucune recherche ne rebute, et son culte de la précision font de cette *Bibliographie* un des ouvrages indispensables pour la connaissance du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Telle que la pratique M. Bonnerot, la bibliographie n'a que peu de chose en commun avec ces compilations qu'on exécute en épuluchant les tiroirs de fiches des bibliothèques ou en tournant les pages des revues, le crayon rouge au poing. C'est une étude critique détaillée, dont le premier devoir est d'élucider la genèse du texte et ses avatars, son histoire avant et après la rédaction, le fait de la publication et toutes ses incidences, l'historique de chaque morceau comme de chaque volume. Mais elle s'impose aussi de mettre en lumière, à l'aide de tous les documents connus, les rapports vrais du critique avec les écrivains ou les sujets dont il a traité. L'appareil rigoureux des références, dates, titres, cotes des bibliothèques de Paris, identifications des citations, concordances variées, index, barde l'ensemble et l'encadre. Si utiles que soient les liasses de bulletins bibliographiques aux spécialistes, M. Bonnerot leur laisse bien autre chose. Quand il a passé, il ne reste plus qu'à étudier le texte même de Sainte-Beuve—en entière connaissance de cause.

Les *Portraits contemporains* eurent d'abord trois volumes (recueil de 1845) puis cinq (1869), et après avoir compté soixante-quatorze études, finirent par en compter quatre-vingt-dix, si l'on ne tient pas compte d'une vingtaine d'autres additions (correspondances, souvenirs, notes). M.

Bonnerot a fait l'effort d'offrir à chaque instant au lecteur tous les points de repère dont il pourrait avoir besoin. Cela conduit à certaines longueurs, plus sensibles à qui lit l'ouvrage d'un bout à l'autre qu'à tel chercheur qui ne le consultera que sur un point précis. Mais est-il essentiel de repasser tant de fois par la description technique complète d'un ouvrage (la correspondance avec les Olivier ou les *Chroniques parisiennes*, par exemple) pour être à même d'en vérifier une référence? Il est possible qu'un système d'abréviations parlantes eût été préférable; on se serait borné, pour les éclaircissements indispensables, à renvoyer le lecteur conscient à une liste bibliographique unique, placée à un bon endroit du livre, et le texte en eût été allégé. Mais ne nous plaignons pas ici d'une abondance dans l'exactitude dont l'origine remonte sans doute aux circonstances de la publication primitive: la *Bibliographie* parut d'abord en tranches minces et souvent arbitrairement découpées dans le *Bulletin du Bibliophile*, dont le directeur, le regretté F. Vandérem, ennemi juré de la méthode de l'histoire littéraire, rendit à celle-ci l'immense service de prendre sous son aile cette *Bibliographie* et une demi-douzaine d'autres dont il avait eu l'idée le premier.

Il n'y a pas sans doute de personnages avec lesquels Sainte-Beuve ait été en rapport pendant le second tiers du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle sur lesquels M. Bonnerot ne fournit des renseignements nouveaux, des documents inédits ou inaccessibles (il a poussé jusqu'à Hawaï pour en obtenir un sur L. de Loménie); et toujours il met au net le dossier de chacun en ramassant en faisceau les faits connus, en les vérifiant sans cesse à l'aide des documents. (Ce qui, par exemple, joue au grand dam de E. Biré, l'illustre hugophobe.) Les chercheurs établis loin de la Seine découvriront non sans joie pages après pages de documentation qu'il leur serait vain de chercher ailleurs sur ce qu'on pourrait appeler les vennelés et les impasses de l'histoire littéraire, où leurs yeux ne rencontrent trop souvent que l'obscurité ou le brouillard. Parfois on tombera sur un article décevant: ne vous y laissez pas prendre; si vous ne trouvez pas là ce que vous attendiez, sachez que c'est pour la grande raison que les documents sont muets. Or une information de ce genre, certifiant une lacune de nos connaissances actuelles, est, dans la formation du savoir, une acquisition positive. Nombreuses sont les citations appropriées, et parmi elles, une grande quantité nous rapporte des jugements de toute origine. Ce n'est pas un des moindres services que rende la *Bibliographie* de M. Bonnerot que de nous permettre de prendre connaissance si commodément des éphémérides de l'opinion, publique ou secrète, éclairée ou seulement avertie, dans le secteur considérable de l'histoire des lettres que dominent les *Portraits contemporains* de Sainte-Beuve.

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